

WINE CLUB - PETERSON

1954

MEMBERSHIP LIST FOR THE YEAR 1954

1954

WINE CLUB OF ISRAEL

A-3b  
B4712  
W15

# The Household Library of Exposition.

**THE SPEECHES OF THE HOLY APOSTLES.** By DONALD FRASER, D.D. Crown 8vo, 3s. 6d.

"Exposition which is useful, instructive, and full of good sense."—*Scotsman*.

**THE LAST SUPPER OF OUR LORD.** By J. MARSHALL LANG, D.D. Second Edition. Crown 8vo, 3s. 6d.

"Earnestness, without a tinge of fanaticism, is the chief characteristic of the work."—*Scotsman*.

**ISAAC, JACOB, AND JOSEPH.** By MARCUS DODS, D.D. Third Edition. Crown 8vo, 3s. 6d.

"For reality, for freshness, for penetration, for insight into character, these chapters are incomparable."—*Christian*.

**ADAM, NOAH, AND ABRAHAM.** By JOSEPH PARKER, D.D. Second Edition. Crown 8vo, 3s.

"Claims very high merit as a popular dramatic pulpit speech."—*British Quarterly*.

**THE LIFE OF DAVID AS REFLECTED IN HIS PSALMS.** By ALEXANDER MACLAREN, D.D. Fourth Edition. Crown 8vo, 3s. 6d.

"It is, we are convinced, the expression of a lifetime of study and careful analysis."—*British and Foreign Evangelical Review*.

---

## THE GALILEAN GOSPEL.

By the Rev. Professor A. B. BRUCE, D.D.

3s. 6d.

## ECCLESIASTES.

By the Rev. JOSEPH PARKER, D.D.

3s.

**THE LAMB OF GOD.** Expositions in the Writings of St John.

By the Rev. W. R. NICOLL, M.A.

3s.

## THE TEMPTATION OF CHRIST.

By the Rev. G. S. BARRETT, B.A.

3s. 6d.

---

## EVANGELICAL CLASSICS.

18mo. 2s. 6d. each.

A New Series of Volumes with the above title. Each Volume will contain a Memoir of a distinguished Evangelical Author, founded on a special study, and extracts from his works.

### LEIGHTON.

Edited by the Rev. W. BLAIR, D.D., Dunblane.

### BUNYAN.

Edited by the Rev. W. HOWIE WYLIE.

---

EDINBURGH : MACNIVEN & WALLACE.



THE KINGDOMS  
OF  
JUDAH & ISRAEL

English Miles

0 10 20 30 40



✓ Bible Class Primers.

EDITED BY PROFESSOR SALMOND, D.D., ABERDEEN.

---

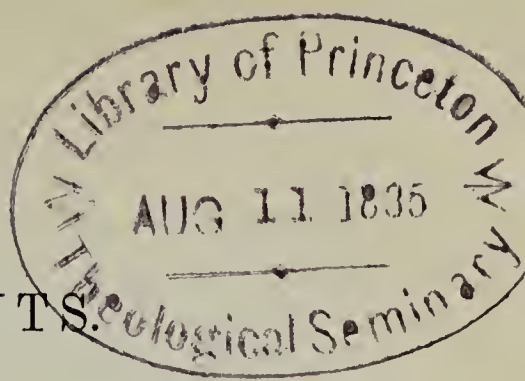
THE  
KINGS OF ISRAEL.

BY THE  
REV. WILLIAM ✓ WALKER, M.A.,  
MONYMUSK.

Edinburgh:  
MACNIVEN & WALLACE.

1882.

SCB #16,964



## CONTENTS.

---

	PAGE
CHAPTER I.—THE DISRUPTION OF ISRAEL, AND REIGN OF JEROBOAM, THE FIRST KING OF THE TEN TRIBES,	9-23
1. The Calamity of the Disruption—2. Its Occurrence Foretold—3. Why Permitted by God—4. Ephraim's Jealousy of Judah—5. Solomon's Oppressions and Idolatries—6. Rehoboam's Refusal of Redress—7. How Rehoboam Met the Revolt—8. Extent of the Kingdom of Israel—9. Advantages which it Possessed—10. How it Used Them—11. Interest of its History—12. Appointment and Qualifications of Jeroboam, the First King—13. Rehoboam Forbidden to Attack Him—14. Jeroboam's First Acts as Ruler; Civil Affairs—15. Ecclesiastical Affairs—16. The Setting Up of the Golden Calves—17. Further Provisions for Public Worship—18. How the People were Perverted—19. Jeroboam's System—20. Prophetic Denunciation of the Altar of Bethel—21. Fall and Death of the Man of God.	
CHAPTER II.—REIGNS OF JEROBOAM (CONTINUED), NADAB, BAASHA, ELAH, ZIMRI, AND OMRI,	24-36
22. Effect of Prophet's Warning on the Old Prophet of Bethel—23. Effect on Jeroboam Himself—24. Death of Abijah—25. The Effect on Jeroboam—26. Jeroboam Attacks Judah—27. How Jeroboam was so long Supported—28. His Character and Policy—29. Nadab, Second King, Slain within Two Years by Usurper—30. Baasha, Third King, and First of Second Dynasty; no Reformer, but Selfish Usurper—31. Makes War on Judah—32. Judah, Helped by Syria, Repels His Attack—33. Elah, Fourth King, Assassinated, after Two Years of Dissolute Reign—34. Zimri, Fifth King, a King in Name for One Week—35. Omri, Sixth King, Contends for Crown Four Years—36. His Services to the Nation; makes Samaria Capital—37. Concludes Peace with His Neighbours—38. His Religious Policy—39. His Character.	

CHAPTER III.—AHAB, OR ACHAAB, SEVENTH KING, PAGE  
37-53

40. Great Importance of Ahab's Reign—41. His First and Irreparable Mistake—42. Establishment of Direct Idolatry—43. Persecution of the Worshipers of Jehovah—43. Mission of Elijah the Tishbite—45. Elijah Withdraws to Cherith—46. Removes to Zarephath—47. Restores to Life the Widow's Son—48. Shows Himself again to Ahab—49. Exposes the Baalite Imposture—50. The Drought Ceases—51. Elijah Flees to Horeb—52. His Vision of Jehovah—53. Again Denounces Ahab; the Case of Naboth.—54. Ahab Repents—55. His Syrian Wars, First (Defensive)—56. His Second (Defensive) Campaign—57. Concludes a Treaty with Benhadad.

CHAPTER IV.—REIGNS OF AHAB (CONTINUED), AHAZIAH, AND JORAM, 54-68

58. Ahab's Third (Offensive) Campaign against the Syrians, and Death—59. His Character—60. Ahaziah, Eighth King, Weak and Superstitious, Rebuked by Elijah—61. Jehoram, or Joram, Ninth King, His Policy—62. Translation of Elijah—63. His Character—64. Elisha Begins His Ministry—65. Joram's Expedition against Moab—66. The Three Kings Consult Elisha—67. Joram asked to Cure Naaman's Leprosy—68. Joram's First War with the Syrians—69. The King of Syria tries to Seize Elisha.

CHAPTER V.—REIGNS OF JEHORAM (CONTINUED), JEHU, JEHOAHAZ, AND JEHOASH OR JOASH, 68-81

70. Joram's Second Syrian War—71. Elisha Predicts Abundance in Samaria—72. Joram's Third and Offensive War against Syria—73. Elisha Supersedes Joram—74. Makes Known to Hazael His Coming Elevation—75. Jehu Anointed and Proclaimed King, Tenth King of Israel—76. Slays Kings of Israel and Judah—77. Puts Jezebel to Death—78. Slays more Royal Personages—79. Massacres Worshipers of Baal—80. His Character—81. His Name Found in the Assyrian Records—82. Jehoahaz, Eleventh King, Reigns Feebly for Seventeen Years—83. Jehoash, Twelfth King, a more Creditable Ruler—84. Repels the Invasion of Amaziah of Judah—85. Death and Character of Elisha.



	PAGE
CHAPTER VI.—REIGNS OF JEROBOAM II., ZACHARIAH, SHALLUM, MENAHEM, PEKAHIAH, PEKAH, AND HOSHEA, . . . . .	82-96
86. Jeroboam II., Thirteenth King, His Career—87. Change in the Condition and the Divine Treatment of the Nation—88. Zachariah, Fourteenth King, Assassinated after Reign of Six Months—89. Shallum, Fifteenth King, Reigns only One Month—90. Menahem, Sixteenth King, the First that Pays Tribute to Assyria—91. Pekahiah, Seventeenth King, His Short, Inglorious Reign—92. Pekah, Eighteenth King, His Energetic Character, but Fatal Policy—93. Allies Himself with Rezin and Attacks Ahaz—94. Ahaz Helped by Assyria—95. Defeat of Pekah and Rezin—96. Assyrian Record of these Events—97. Hoshea, Nineteenth King, adopts Ruinous Policy—98. Vainly Seeks Help from Egypt; is cast into Prison—99. Fall of Samaria—100. Assyrian Account of the Capture—101. Captivity of the Inhabitants—102. Place of Captivity—103. Effect of Captivity on Israel—104. Question as to Continued Existence of the Ten Tribes as a Separate Community—105. The Samaritans—106. Change in the Spoken Language of the People—107. Extinction of Idolatry.	

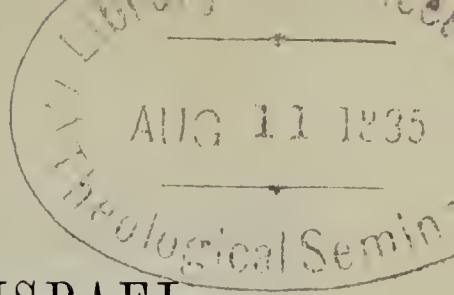
# CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF THE KINGS OF ISRAEL.

(Same as in A. V. of Bible).

NAME.	DATE OF ACCESSION. B. C.	DURATION OF REIGN (in round num- bers).*
Jeroboam, . . . . .	975	22 years
Nadab, . . . . .	954	2 ,,
Baasha, . . . . .	953	24 ,,
Elah, . . . . .	930	2 ,,
Zimri, . . . . .	929	7 days
Omri, . . . . .	929	12 years
Ahab, . . . . .	918	22 ,,
Ahaziah, . . . . .	898	2 ,,
Jehoram, . . . . .	896	12 ,,
Jehu . . . . .	886	28 ,,
Jehoahaz, . . . . .	856	17 ,,
Joash, . . . . .	841	16 ,,
Jeroboam II., . . . . .	825	41 or 51 years
Zachariah, . . . . .	773	6 months
Shallum, . . . . .	772	1 month
Menahem, . . . . .	772	10 years
Pekahiah, . . . . .	761	2 ,,
Pekah, . . . . .	759	20 or 29 years
Hoshea, . . . . .	730	9 years
Destruction of Kingdom, . . . . .	721	

\* On account of the peculiar Jewish mode of computation, the reigns can only be given in round numbers. Except in the case of a few Kings who only reigned some days or months, no fractions of a year are stated. The fraction is either omitted altogether or counted as an additional year. Further, the dates are not computed from any one fixed period, but from the accession of the contemporary King of Judah. With such a mode of computation there must be some uncertainty. The majority of chronologists, however, differ but very slightly in most dates; and the general accuracy of the chronology of the Kings of Israel has been very strongly confirmed by the results of recent research. The only serious difficulty for which no satisfactory explanation has yet been found is the occurrence of two gaps in the chronology—one of eleven years at the end of Jeroboam II.'s reign, another of eight and a-half years at the close of the reign of Pekah. Most chronologists assume that there was an interregnum at each of those periods; but as the Scripture affords no countenance to this assumption, others infer that some error has crept into the numbers, and that the gaps should be filled up by adding eleven years to the reign of Jeroboam II. and eight and a-half years to that of Pekah.

The list given above is the same as that in the A. V. of the Bible; the two alternative modes of accounting for the two gaps being indicated as above.



# THE KINGS OF ISRAEL.

—:0:—

## CHAPTER I.

THE DISRUPTION OF ISRAEL, AND REIGN OF JEROBOAM,  
FIRST KING OF THE TEN TRIBES.

1. THE CALAMITY OF THE DISRUPTION. The rending of the small nation of Israel into two rival monarchies at the close of Solomon's reign was a fatal blow to its earthly power. It was the prelude of its ruin as a free and independent people. Henceforth, as a rule, it could wield for protection against the Gentile nations at best but the strength of one arm. The two halves of the nation seldom united in self-defence. For many years, and indeed till reunion may be said to have become hopeless, they were in a state of chronic warfare with each other.

2. THE DISRUPTION FORETOLD (1 Kings xi. 29). The prophet Ahijah, the Shilonite, foretold the disruption in God's name to Jeroboam during the reign of Solomon. This was done in an acted parable, such as lent so strange an impressiveness to the messages of the prophets of action. Solomon had made Jeroboam, who was "a mighty man of valour," and an energetic administrator, "ruler over all the charge (or burden) of the house of Joseph," that is to say, superintendent of the taxes and forced labours of his own tribe, Ephraim, and probably that of Manasseh also, in the building of Millo<sup>a</sup> and the fortifying of Jerusalem.

<sup>a</sup> Millo, or "the Millo," was apparently a fort (or citadel as the Septuagint or *Greek version of the Seventy makes it*), on Mount Zion, dating—name and thing—from Jebusite times.

In this position Jeroboam acquired influence with the men of Ephraim, and doubtless with those also of other northern tribes, and aspired to independent rule. "He lifted up his hand against the king." But while he excited the jealousy and hostility of Solomon, he was upheld by the prophetic message from Jehovah. Ahijah "found him in the way" as he "went out of Jerusalem," and "they two were alone in the field, and Ahijah caught the new garment that was on him, and rent it in twelve pieces, and he said to Jeroboam, Take thee ten pieces." The action implied that Jehovah would rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon (in the person of his son), and give ten tribes to Jeroboam.

3. WHY GOD PERMITTED THE DISRUPTION (1 Kings xi. 33). The reason of this was the spread of idolatry among the people. Ahijah, speaking in God's name, states the fact distinctly. "They have forsaken me, and have worshipped Ashtoreth,<sup>a</sup> the goddess of the Zidonians, Chemosh, the god of the Moabites, and Milcom, the god of the children of Ammon."

Under David and Solomon the influence of Israel had extended greatly over the neighbouring peoples, but the effect was evil rather than good. Israel did not convert the Gentiles to Jehovah, but the Gentiles converted Israel to idols—to Ashtoreth, to Chemosh, and to Milcom. Power corrupted the people; their power therefore was to be broken. The disruption was the first, as the captivity was the last, step in a providential course meant to wean the people from idolatry.

As to the causes which moved the people to rebel, there were three more or less immediate.

<sup>a</sup> *Ashtoreth*, the moon goddess of the Phœnicians, represented the passive principle in nature, as their sun-god *Baal* represented the active principle. *Chemosh* (fire, glow), the war-god of the Moabites. *Milcom*, Molech (1 Kings xi. 7); Moloch (Amos v. 26), (*Melek*, king), the god of the children of Ammon. These two latter idols appear to have represented both the sun and fire, and to have been worshipped with human sacrifices.

4. **EPHRAIM'S JEALOUSY OF JUDAH.** It was only under the most judicious and considerate treatment that some of the middle and northern tribes, and especially Ephraim, would have brooked the continued supremacy of Judah. From the settlement in Canaan till a recent period Ephraim had held the place of honour. The tribe had had famous men within it—Caleb, Samuel, Jephthah. It also occupied the central and fairest region of the land, and included within its borders the ancient ecclesiastical and civil capitals Shiloh and Shechem. Now, however, it had sunk to the second place. David and Solomon had between them made Jerusalem, which lay on the very borders of the tribe of Judah,<sup>a</sup> and was to all practical purposes a Judæan city, the centre of power and worship for the whole nation. Both those great monarchs, however, had in general known how to conciliate Ephraim.

5. **SOLOMON'S OPPRESSIONS AND IDOLATRIES.** In the latter part of his reign, Solomon created great discontent amongst his subjects by the heavy taxes and forced labours which he exacted of them, for the support of his luxurious court, and the gratification of his extravagant tastes in building. His countenance of idolatry naturally aggravated the discontent. Had his reign continued somewhat longer, he would have found it necessary to adopt a change of policy, in order to avoid rebellion and disruption.

6. **REHOBAM'S REFUSAL OF REDRESS** (1 Kings xii.). Solomon's successor and son Rehoboam had an excellent opportunity of acquiring popularity and averting disunion, by timely concession. But he refused all concession. He never even attempted conciliation. On the contrary, he acted from the first as if his purpose was to provoke the Northern

<sup>a</sup> The territories of Judah extended to the south wall of Jerusalem ("the south shoulder of the Jebusite," Josh. xv. 8), or to the "valley of the son of Hinnom."

tribes to rebel against him, trusting to his power to stamp out the rebellion at once, and thus place his authority on a firmer basis. His conduct is hardly intelligible on any other supposition. When he went to be crowned at Shechem, the people, headed by Jeroboam, who had now returned from Egypt, where he had taken refuge from the vengeance of Solomon, presented a respectful petition praying for a relaxation of the heavy burdens which his father had laid on them. Rehoboam asked three days to consider the matter. He then consulted "with the old men that stood before Solomon his father." They advised compliance. "Speak good words unto them," said they, "then they will be thy servants for ever." But Rehoboam "forsook the counsel of the old men," and "consulted with the young men that were grown up with him." They advised a defiant refusal of the people's prayer; and their advice was taken.

When Jeroboam and all the people returned on the third day, Rehoboam's rude reply was this, "My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke; my father also chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions."<sup>a</sup> This was wanton defiance. It was answered by instant and resolute revolt. The cry was raised. "What portion have we in David? . . . To your tents, O Israel."<sup>b</sup> Now see to thine own house, David." Thus the disruption was accomplished.

7. HOW REHOBOAM MET THE REVOLT (1 Kings xii. 18). Rehoboam seemed utterly unprepared for this most natural result of his act of wanton defiance. The first step which he took looked more like an attempt to aggravate the rebellion than to

<sup>a</sup> The scorpions are supposed to have been whips armed with hooks, or with barbed points. Others take the word to mean rods with spikes or knots.

<sup>b</sup> The above is, almost word for word, the war-cry of Sheba, the son of Bichri, who headed a like rising in David's own day, at the close of Absalom's rebellion. That attempt failed, but it ought to have taught caution to "the house of David." At that time also "the men of Israel claimed ten parts in the king."

quell it. To investigate the matter, he “sent Adoram, who was over the tribute,” or superintendent of taxes and forced labours—the very last man to pacify or conciliate the people. The sight of him seemed enough to drive them to desperation. “All Israel stoned him with stones, that he died.” Rehoboam narrowly escaped the same fate ; but he succeeded in fleeing to Jerusalem.

It was not to be expected that the words of insult which Rehoboam had spoken to the people could be explained or atoned for by anything that he could now say ; still less, by anything that could be said for him, by others. The breach was complete and final. The people of Israel, “the smallest in number of all peoples,” was split up into two nations.

The seceding tribes lost no time in forming themselves into the kingdom of Israel.

**8. EXTENT OF THE NEW KINGDOM.** From the fragmentary intimations in the sacred history, it is difficult to be quite sure of the precise extent of the kingdom of Israel. Most probably at first all the ten tribes—*i.e.*, the whole twelve—with the exception of Judah and Levi,<sup>a</sup> which latter was apparently purposely omitted from the reckoning, joined in the movement. But three of the tribes which adjoined closely to Judah—Benjamin, Simeon, and Dan—were soon constrained, doubtless by the necessities of their position, to revert to their allegiance to Judah. The Levites also generally migrated from Israel to Judah, though, as will be seen, some of them remained in their own cities, and these for a time withstood the power of Jeroboam.

Thus only about seven complete tribes out of the twelve adhered eventually to the Northern kingdom. But these seven tribes possessed more than three-fourths (9372 square acres out of 12,675) of the land

<sup>a</sup> Some suppose that the tribe omitted from the reckoning was not Levi, but “Little Benjamin,” which lay so close to Judah that it could not be dissociated from it (1 Kings xii. 21).

of Palestine, including most of the fairest and most fertile districts. Still more, the dependent territories on the east of Jordan—David's conquests—Moab, Edom, Ammon, and part of Syria, all remained in connection with Israel, as did also "the sea coast from Accho to Japho."<sup>a</sup>

Thus Israel, though small in reality—not at best perhaps much above one-third the size of Scotland<sup>b</sup>—was yet, as compared with Judah, a great and powerful kingdom.

**9. ADVANTAGES WHICH ISRAEL POSSESSED AS A NATION.** The new nation, though the child of revolt, started on its career of self-government with rare advantages. It had for encouragement the favour and countenance of Jehovah; for warning, it had the humbled and broken Judah.

Its path was clear. It knew that everything in Israel depended on Jehovah, the Almighty. It stood forth among God's people as the champion of reform, for which there was urgent need, both south and north. It knew that in Israel reform was possible only on the lines laid down in the law; and in accordance with the will of Jehovah.

Thus the young nation had before it a clear course and a grand career. Strong in the strength of Jehovah, it might soon have rallied to itself the whole people of the Lord, and thus have speedily repaired the broken unity, and made Israel greater and more powerful than ever among the nations of the earth.

**10. HOW THE NATION USED ITS ADVANTAGES.** Israel speedily cast from it these great opportunities. At the very outset of its career it took a step which rendered real prosperity and permanent success impossible to it. It set itself at once

<sup>a</sup> See Smith's Dict., S. V. *Israel*.

<sup>b</sup> The extent of Scotland is 33,000 square miles; the home possessions of Israel were less than the third of this. The dependencies no doubt considerably altered the proportions; but they did not contribute in a corresponding degree to the strength and security of the nation.



in direct opposition to the law and the honour of Jehovah ; and in this infatuated course it persisted to the close of its career.

The history of Israel is thus throughout mainly a chronicle of rebellion, idolatry, and impiety, of ever-deepening apostacy, degeneracy, and corruption.

11. INTEREST OF THE HISTORY. It must not be supposed, however, that the history is, on this account, less interesting or even less edifying than the history of the more faithful Judah. The contrary is the case. In the annals of Israel the workings of God's Providence are disclosed in an unusually clear and striking manner; the course of the history being lighted up at intervals like the landscape in a thunderstorm at night, by ever-recurring flashes of "light from Heaven." The judgments of God are abroad in the land ; and when vice and crime are rampant a solitary "Man of God," armed with resistless power, lifts his voice for truth and right, and compels respect and submission. The whole history is mainly that of a fitful struggle between faithful prophets and wicked rulers. The details of this struggle occupy the chief and by much the most interesting portion of the annals.

*Jeroboam, First King* (B.C. 975—B.C. 954).

12. HIS APPOINTMENT AND QUALIFICATIONS (1 Kings xii. 20). The rupture with Rehoboam was followed up instantly by the formation of the new kingdom and the appointment of its first king. "When all Israel heard that Jeroboam was come again, they sent and called him unto the congregation, and made him king over all Israel." Apparently Jeroboam, with a view to the issue of the conflict, had already returned from Egypt, and was at hand when called. His appointment was a foregone conclusion. And so far as can be judged from all that is known of his previous history, the choice of the nation seemed wise. As superintendent under

Solomon, Jeroboam had shown himself a man of vigour and capacity—"a mighty man of valour."

The qualities which recommended him to Solomon as superintendent recommended him to Israel as king. Judged by a worldly standard, he seemed the very man to establish and protect the nascent state.

13. REHOBAM FORBIDDEN TO ATTACK THE NEW KING (1 Kings xii. 22). Then Jeroboam had the countenance and the promised favour and help of Jehovah. "If thou wilt walk in my ways, and do that which is right in mine eyes, I will build thee a sure house." This was God's promise through his prophet Ahijah; and Jeroboam had early proof of his faithfulness.

He was no sooner in danger than God helped him out of it. Rehoboam prepared to attack him at once. He assembled for that purpose a great army—even "a hundred and fourscore thousand men, that were warriors." But the attack was countermanded. "Shemaiah, the man of God," speaking in Jehovah's name, forbade Rehoboam and his men to "go up and fight against their brethren." "Return every man to his house; for this thing is from me." The people complied: Rehoboam was deserted, and had to acquiesce in the loss of a crown. This was what Jehovah did for Jeroboam in the establishment of his kingdom; and it was only a specimen of what He would have done in the maintenance of it, had Jeroboam "walked in his ways." In what way Jeroboam was to walk soon became manifest.

14. JEROBOAM'S FIRST ACTS AS RULER—CIVIL AFFAIRS (1 Kings xii. 25). He looked first to the defence of his kingdom:—

1. He built or fortified Shechem, the ancient capital, which, for a time, he made the capital of the new nation. This supplied a strong centre and rallying point for the home possessions.

2. Then, to protect the possessions across the Jordan, he "built Peniel," Jacob's Peniel (face of

God),<sup>a</sup> situated between the Jabbok and Succoth, and on the important route between Damascus and Shechem.

15. **ECCLESIASTICAL AFFAIRS** (1 Kings xii. 26). Jeroboam next turned his attention to the ecclesiastical affairs of the nation, and here he at once committed a great crime and irreparable blunder. Instead of walking in God's appointed ways, or taking counsel with Him through His prophet, as to any necessary modification of established rules, Jeroboam "devised out of his own heart" certain new measures for regulating the worship of his people. These were conceived entirely in a worldly spirit. The situation was indeed perplexing. The people of God had become two nations, but they remained one church. And of the one church the great central Sanctuary—to which, on solemn occasions, all Israelites, north and south, were expected to resort—lay within the territory of the southern nation. Here was a danger to the authority, perhaps to the life, of the northern king.

Should Jeroboam's subjects continue to frequent Rehoboam's capital, their allegiance could hardly be safe. "Jeroboam said in his heart, now then shall the kingdom return to the house of David. If the people go up to sacrifice at Jerusalem, then shall the heart of the people turn again unto their Lord—unto Rehoboam, king of Judah, and they shall kill me and go again to Rehoboam."

The apparent danger was, however, no real danger, Jehovah knew how to avert it, and make good his promise to Jeroboam. The king had only to "take counsel" of Him through Ahijah. He did "take counsel," but manifestly like Rehoboam, he took it only of men like-minded with himself.

16. **THE SETTING UP OF TWO GOLDEN CALVES** (1 Kings xii. 28). The result of Jeroboam's consultation was that he "made two calves of gold,

<sup>a</sup> See Genesis xxxii. 30 and 31.

and said unto them, it is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem; ‘Behold thy gods,<sup>a</sup> O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt,’—and he set the one in Bethel,<sup>b</sup> and the other he put in Dan,<sup>c</sup> “and the people went to worship before the calves.” Thus Jeroboam listened to the promptings of worldly ambition, disregarding the known will and inevitable judgments of the Almighty. He did and said to the very letter, what Aaron did and said with such tragical results to himself and the rebellious people at Sinai. And he followed up his defiant act with others calculated to give effect to it.

#### 17. FURTHER PROVISIONS FOR PUBLIC WORSHIP (1 Kings xii. 31).

1. At each of the two places, Bethel and Dan, he erected a house of Bamoth or high places in imitation, no doubt, of the temple at Jerusalem.

2. “He ordained priests for the high places, and for the demons,<sup>d</sup> and for the calves, which he had made” (2 Chron. xi. 15),—“priests from all ranks of the people,<sup>e</sup> which were not of the sons of Levi” (1 Kings xii. 31); the only condition of appointment being, that the candidate should “consecrate himself with a young bullock and seven rams” (2 Chron. xiii. 9).

*a* The words in the original may doubtless be rendered “Behold thy God,” though the verb is plural, but the more correct form is given in Nehemiah ix. 18. “This is thy God,” &c. The latter form was probably used at each of the shrines—Bethel and Dan.

*b* Bethel, Jacob’s “house of God,” now *Beitin*, lay about twelve miles north of Jerusalem.

*c* Dan, anciently Laish or Leshem, a town in the extreme north of Palestine. Dan became an irregular shrine of some note from the time of Micah.

*d* Translated “devils” in the authorised version. In the original, the word means generally “goats,” or literally simply hairy animals; and here, doubtless, it means Satyrs or wood-demons, and chiefly the god Pan. This is a species of idolatry which, like that of the golden calf, was probably borrowed from Egypt. But as no mention is made of this additional idolatry by the historian of the Kings, it may not have prevailed to any great extent.

*e* In the authorised version this passage is rendered “of the lowest of the people;” but this is now admitted to be an erroneous translation.

3. He “ordained a feast in the eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month, like unto the feast that is in Judah;” that is to say, like the feast of tabernacles, which was held on the fifteenth day of the *seventh* month. But Jeroboam “devised” the month “out of his own heart;” probably because the eighth month suited the vintage of the northern kingdom better than the seventh did. Thus Jeroboam instituted for his people a complete system of unauthorised and semi-idolatrous worship, the observance of which he apparently made compulsory upon them.<sup>a</sup> There was small need however for compulsion. The system was only too well adapted to the tastes as well as to the circumstances of the people.

#### 18. HOW THE PEOPLE WERE PERVERTED.

It is impossible to understand the history of Israel, north or south, at this period and onwards till the captivity, without bearing in mind the very elementary and unspiritual character of their ideas regarding God, and His worship, in spite of the stern schooling to which they had been so long subjected.

1. The mass of the people of God, both north and south, seem to have still regarded Jehovah, the God of Israel, as a tribal or national god, presiding over Israel; very much as Chemosh presided over Moab, and Milcom over the children of Ammon.

2. Then they believed that these “gods of the nations” could, in their own way, and in their own place, “help”<sup>b</sup> the people of Israel as Jehovah did, if duly propitiated; and too generally they preferred the impure and idolatrous rites, by which these gods were worshipped, to the pure worship of Jehovah.

<sup>a</sup> He appears to have stationed guards at certain points on the frontier to prevent his subjects from going up to Jerusalem to worship. According to Jewish tradition, these guards were continued till the reign of Hoshea, the last king.

<sup>b</sup> Ahaz, eleventh king of Judah, expressed, at Damascus, what was probably the common feeling of the mass of the people, both of Judah and Israel. “He sacrificed unto the gods of Damascus, which smote him, and he said, Because the gods of the kings of Assyria help *them*, I will sacrifice to them, that they may help *me*.” (2 Chron. xxviii. 23.)

3. Hence, while not entirely forsaking Jehovah, they were always prone not only to join in the worship of idols, but also to mix up idolatrous practices with the worship of Jehovah. They must have, if possible, some material object towards which to direct their worship. They could not readily realise, and would not be satisfied with, a purely spiritual and invisible presence of God.<sup>a</sup>

### 19. DEBASING EFFECT OF JEROBOAM'S WHOLE SYSTEM (1 Kings xii. 30 ; xiv. 9).

1. When the people were thus prone to idolatrous practices, the establishment of Jeroboam's system, especially the setting up of the golden calves, could not but have the most pernicious influence upon them. It gave to their worst propensities and practices the highest civil sanction and encouragement. It legalised their besetting sin. It set them off by order and authority on their favourite downward course. For, bad as the system was, it opened a door to worse corruptions than those which it formally sanctioned. The worship of God, through a golden calf, was a breach of the second commandment; but it was also one, which from the very nature of the case, led inevitably to a breach of the first. The second is the outwork of the first. To many, perhaps to most of the ignorant, weak-minded men of Israel, the golden calf soon became—not the mere representative of their God, but a god in itself—an idol. "Thou hast gone," said the prophet, "and made thee other gods, and molten images," *i.e.*, molten images as other gods. (1 Kings xiv. 9.)

2. Further, the setting up of the calves was a breaking down of the barriers between idolatry and true worship, which made the true so like the false, that the transition from true to false became perilously easy. Thus it is easy to see how great was "the sin of Jeroboam" in establishing such a pernicious

<sup>a</sup> It was to this weakness that Jeroboam pandered in setting up the golden calves.

system in Israel. So heinous was his sin considered that almost the whole remaining history of his reign is taken up with divine denunciations of it, and divine judgments inflicted on account of it.

20. PROPHEPIC DENUNCIATION OF THE ALTAR OF BETHEL (1 Kings xiii.). It appears <sup>a</sup> that, at the very first celebration of Jeroboam's self-devised feast in the eighth month, and at the most solemn part of the service, there occurred a startling divine interposition. Suddenly a prophet's voice was raised, and the hand of God fell upon the king and his altar. Jeroboam himself was officiating as priest; <sup>b</sup> he had just "ascended the altar to burn incense;" he "stood on the altar," or on the inclined plane or ledge surrounding the altar, when "a man of God out of Judah" raised his voice and "cried against the altar in the word of the Lord," denouncing the doom of heaven on it and its schismatical priests. A "child born to the house of David," or a prince of the rival kingdom of Judah, should arise as the scourge of God, and offer on the doomed altar "the priests of the high places that burnt incense on it." "Men's bones should be burnt upon it." The "man of God" set his seal to this prophetic doom, by working a miracle. "Behold," said he, "the altar shall be rent, and the ashes that are upon it shall be poured out." As if to stay the hand of God, Jeroboam "put forth his hand from the altar, saying, Lay hold on him." It was a presumptuous act, as Jeroboam quickly found, for "his hand which he put forth dried up, so that he could not pull it in again to him." At the same time came the promised sign—"The altar was rent, and the ashes were poured out." These two signs, especially the

<sup>a</sup> The last versc of 1 Kings xii. should be read in connexion with 1 Kings xiii. 1, "So he offered," &c., "and behold there came," &c.

<sup>b</sup> This action of Jeroboam was in accordance with the practice of his predecessors in the undivided kingdom, David and Solomon. At this period men of high authority, both kings and prophets, offered up sacrifice to God, even on occasions of the highest solemnity.

withering of his own hand, brought the proud king to reason. He felt the hand of God, as well as saw its working; and from threats he descended to supplication. "Entreat now the face of the Lord thy God—that my hand may be restored me again." His prayer was granted, and thus he and his people had a third sign in confirmation of the mission and the truthfulness of "the man of God."

21. FALL AND DEATH OF THE MAN OF GOD (1 Kings xiii. 11). They soon obtained a fourth sign, more tragical than any of the former three. It was supplied by "the man of God" in his own person. He told Jeroboam that God had expressly forbidden him to do a certain thing. Yet before finally leaving Bethel he did that thing; and then, on him also fell the hand of God! His conduct appears all but inexplicable. He had been expressly forbidden by the word of Jehovah to eat bread or drink water, or return to Judah by the way that he came. He gave proof that he appreciated the binding character of this command, by declaring to Jeroboam when the latter invited him to go home with him and "refresh himself and accept a reward;" that he would not comply with his invitation, though he would give him "half his house." Yet in a very short space of time he accepted a like invitation! He set out indeed on his return journey to Judah by a different way from that by which he came. But an "old prophet that dwelt in Bethel" having heard from his son<sup>a</sup> of the sayings and doings of the prophet from Judah, rode after him, and finding him "sitting under the oak"<sup>b</sup> or terebinth, at once persuaded him to return with him and eat and drink at Bethel. The old prophet simply "lied unto him," telling the prophet of Judah that he was a prophet, and that

<sup>a</sup> "Sons" in the Septuagint and in the A. V.

<sup>b</sup> Probably, as has been suggested, "there was a single well-known tree of the kind standing by itself near Bethel, which the author supposed his readers to be acquainted with." See Speaker's Commentary, ii. 565.



an angel had spoken unto him "in the word of Jehovah," desiring him to bring him back to eat and drink. How the "man of God," lately so firm and faithful, could yield to such a representation,—acting on the mere word of a stranger in contradiction to God's express command,—seems almost unaccountable. It was an instance of weakness which might have discredited the prophet's whole mission had it been allowed to pass unpunished. It therefore met with instant and signal punishment. While sitting at table with his aged seducer, the man of God received an intimation of his doom. The old prophet "cried unto the man of God that came from Judah, Thus saith Jehovah, Forasmuch as thou hast disobeyed the mouth of Jehovah . . . thy carcase shall not come unto the sepulchre of thy fathers" (1 Kings xiii. 21). This time the old prophet did not lie unto him. His words were speedily fulfilled. When his guest set out again on his return journey "a lion met him in the way and slew him." He slew but did not mutilate. He stood by the carcase till it was removed for decent burial by the old prophet of Bethel.

Thus the man of God from Judah, by his death, gave Jeroboam and his people a fourth sign of the truth of his mission, and left them altogether without excuse in continuing to adhere to the worship of the golden calf. The effect upon them, however, appears to have been very slight and transient.

#### QUESTIONS AND POINTS FOR ENQUIRY.

1. *Mention some of the jealousies and grievances that led to the disruption of Israel.*
2. *Did disruption prove a sufficient remedy?*
3. *What was there in the faith of the main body of the people of Israel which laid them specially open to the allurements of idolatry?*

4. *Specify the commandments which the setting up of the golden calves infringed—directly or indirectly.*

5. *What kind and what amount of proof did Jeroboam receive of the truth and genuineness of the mission of the prophet from Judah?*

---

## CHAPTER II.

REIGNS OF JEROBOAM (CONTINUED), NADAB, BAASHA, ELAH, ZIMRI, AND OMRI.

22. EFFECT ON THE OLD PROPHET OF BETHEL (1 Kings xiii. 23).—The importance of the interposition of the prophet from Judah appears to have been realised at Bethel only by the old prophet who acted such a cruelly deceitful part on the occasion. It is manifest that he thoroughly believed the saying of the misguided prophet; and he did something to atone for his own grievous sin. He “took up the carcase of the man of God” and brought it back, and laid it in his own grave.” Then he charged his sons on his own death to bury him in the same sepulchre with the man of God. “For,” he added, “the saying which he cried by the word of Jehovah against the altar in Bethel, and against all the houses of the high places which are in the cities of Samaria<sup>a</sup> shall surely come to pass.” If the saying came to pass, the bones of the priests of Bethel would be burnt on the altar of Bethel. The bones of the man of God from Judah might be spared,<sup>b</sup> and those of

<sup>a</sup> There was no Samaria in existence at the time when the prophet spoke, but there were cities of Israel; and by the time that the history was written the cities of Israel came to be spoken of as the cities of Samaria, the capital of the nation. Hence the historian uses the word as conveying a more distinct meaning to the men of his own time.

<sup>b</sup> This hope was realised. See 2 Kings xxiii. 17, 18. “It is the sepulchre of the man of God which came from Judah, . . . and he

the old prophet mingled with them might also be spared.

23. EFFECT ON JEROBOAM HIMSELF (1 Kings xiii. 33).—On Jeroboam himself the warning appears to have been thrown away. He “returned not from his evil way, but made again of all ranks of the people priests of the high places.” “And this thing became sin to the house of Jeroboam even to cut it off, and to destroy it from the face of the earth.”

Hence the second great judgment fell on the house of Jeroboam.

24. DEATH OF ABIJAH (1 Kings xiv.).—The blow fell in the midst of seeming prosperity. All seemed well. Jeroboam had transferred his residence from Shechem “to the ancient Canaanite city (Josh. xii. 24) Tirzah, the beautiful (Cant. vi. 4), two hours to the north of Samaria, amidst cultivated fruit and olive-clad hills, upon a swelling height, with glorious outlook over the hills and valleys of rich Samaria.”<sup>a</sup> On this earthly paradise the shadow of death fell.

Abijah [Jehovah is my father, or my desire], Jeroboam’s eldest son, and presumably his heir, fell sick. Worldly help seemed vain, and in his fatherly distress the worldly king thought of the “man of God,” Ahijah the Shilonite. But he feared to consult him openly. He therefore sent his wife to inquire of him concerning the child secretly and in disguise. “Arise,” he said, “and disguise thyself, that thou be not known to be the wife of Jeroboam, and get thee to Shiloh. There is Ahijah the prophet . . . he will tell thee what will become of the child” (1 Kings xiv. 1-3). The anxious mother complied. She went to Shiloh in disguise, and to make the disguise more effectual, she took with her (Josiah) said, Let him alone, . . . let no man move his bones. So they let his bones alone.” Thus the bones of both prophets were left undisturbed.

<sup>a</sup> Edersheim’s “Judah and Israel,” p. 152.

for the prophet only such a present as the humblest visitor might offer, viz., "ten loaves and cracknels, and a cruse of honey." But it was folly to hope to deceive a man of God; even when, as in this case, "his eyes were set by reason of his age." Though blind to the outer world, the prophet had the inward vision, and knew who his visitor was, and what she wanted. No sooner did he hear "the sound of her feet, as she came in at the door, than he said, 'Come in thou wife of Jeroboam, why makest thou thyself strange? I am sent to thee with hard (tidings).'

"Go," he said, "and tell Jeroboam, thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel, Forasmuch as I exalted thee from among the people, and made thee a prince over my people Israel, . . . yet thou hast not been as my servant David, . . . but hast done evil above all that were before thee, for thou hast gone and made thee other gods and molten images." Therefore, behold I will bring evil upon the house of Jeroboam"—nay, utter ruin and destruction—"him that dieth of Jeroboam in the city shall the dogs eat, and him that dieth in the fields shall the fowls of the air eat" (1 Kings xiv. 1-11). This was the general doom on the house of Jeroboam. The fate of Abijah was comparatively merciful. He should indeed die, and die at once, but he should die a natural death, and be honoured with a decent and royal burial. All Israel should "mourn for him and bury him." He only of Jeroboam "should come to the grave, because in him there was found (some) good thing toward Jehovah the God of Israel in the house of Jeroboam." For this he should be taken away from the violent death to come.

This was the sum of the prophet's message to the anguish-struck queen and mother, "Arise, go to thine house, when thy feet enter the city, the child shall die." So it was. "Jeroboam's wife arose, and

↳ Here again the golden calves are treated as "other gods."

came to Tirzah. She came to the threshold of the house, and the youth died" (verse 17).

25. EFFECT OF THIS JUDGMENT ON JEROBOAM.—Neither the actual loss of his first-born son, nor the prospective extinction of his whole house, availed to reclaim Jeroboam. It was too late. The practice of sin had become inveterate both in prince and people. It would have required a faith that could remove mountains to turn them again to God. It is clear that Jeroboam never possessed a lively and intelligent faith in Jehovah at all; and little could be expected of his subjects, always prone to idolatry, and now authoritatively trained to the practice of it. They had all necessarily come to associate the idea of Jehovah with that of the golden calf; many of them doubtless identified the image with the Divinity.

26. JEROBOAM DEFEATED IN AN ATTACK ON JUDAH (1 Kings xv. 6; 2 Chron. xiii. 2). The third great judgment on Jeroboam fell on his kingdom in the shape of a defeat at the hand of Abijah king of Judah, followed by the loss of three border cities with their districts, Bethel, Jeshanah, and Ephraim.<sup>a</sup> The historian of the Kings says nothing of this defeat. He dismisses the reign of Jeroboam, after the loss of Abijah, in two sentences, referring for an account of his wars to "the book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel," and stating that he reigned twenty-two years. The Chronicles (2 Chron. xiii. 2-11) give details of the battle, which was fought near Mount Zemaraim, east of Bethel and north of Jericho. The two armies were encamped on opposite sides of the mount, and, before engaging, Abijah stood upon it, and delivered an address to "Jeroboam and all Israel," in which he treated them as rebels against Jehovah and the house of

<sup>a</sup> The above three places lay probably closely together; but the sites of the two latter (Jeshanah and Ephraim) have not been clearly identified.

David, and worshippers of "no gods." "As for us," he said, "Jehovah is our God." "God himself is with us for Captain, and his priests with sounding trumpets. . . . O children of Israel, fight ye not against Jehovah the God of your fathers: for ye shall not prosper." They did not prosper, though their numbers were double that of Judah (800,000<sup>a</sup> against 400,000), and though Jeroboam showed himself a skilful general. "Jeroboam caused an ambushment to come about behind them," and thus attacked Judah at once in front and rear. But Judah cried unto Jehovah, "and God smote Jeroboam and all Israel before Abijah and Judah." The chronicler adds, "there fell down slain of Israel five hundred thousand chosen men."<sup>b</sup> Jeroboam thus suffered a great defeat and some loss of territory and prestige. And as this is the last important event of his life that has been placed upon record, it may be truly said that his reign closed in defeat and failure.

27. HOW JEROBOAM WAS SO LONG SUPPORTED (1 Kings xiv. 25). He had been long spared such a humiliation as this, and the reason no doubt lay, not in his own merits, but in the shortcomings of Judah. Israel was supported as a counterpoise and corrective to Judah. It is important to note what divine favour was shown to Jeroboam.

1. There was, first, the disbanding by God's command of Rehoboam's army, when it was assembled to reconquer Israel at the beginning of Jeroboam's reign.

2. In the fifth year of his reign, Rehoboam, be-

<sup>a</sup> These numbers probably do not represent the troops that were actually brought into the field, at least on any one occasion, but the whole available force of fighting men in each little kingdom. When David numbered the people "there were in Israel eight hundred thousand valiant men that drew the sword" (the exact number in this case); "and the men of Judah were five hundred thousand men," only 100,000 more than on the present occasion.

<sup>b</sup> Some inaccuracy may have crept into the text here as regards the numbers slain. Professor Rawlinson thinks that the number of 500,000 chosen men represents the whole loss of Israel during the war; Ederheim, that it represents "rather the *proportion* of those who fell during the war than a numerically exact statement."

cause he "forsook Jehovah and all Israel with him," was punished by God, while Jeroboam was assisted through the means of a foreign invasion. Shishak,<sup>a</sup> king of Egypt, came up as Jeroboam's ally, and took a great many cities of Judah, and conquered or helped to conquer for Jeroboam a number of Levitical and Canaanite cities, which, though within his territories, had as yet withstood his authority—a fact which has been confirmed in the most interesting way by the decipherment of the famous inscription of Shishak at Karnak, where the names of a good many of the cities may be read.<sup>b</sup>

Thus mainly on account of the less excusable shortcomings of the rival monarch, Jeroboam was twice exceptionally favoured.

3. The further favour was shown of granting to Jeroboam an apparently peaceful close to his reign, "the days" of which "were two and twenty years." He is said merely to have "slept with his fathers."

28. HIS CHARACTER AND POLICY. Jeroboam's character as a warrior and civil administrator has been already described. It stood high. In regard to religion, however, he must be judged very differently. Everything conspires to prove that Jeroboam had no true sense of religion—no intelligent or consistent faith in Jehovah as the one supreme King of heaven and earth.

In his ecclesiastical policy he was actuated wholly

<sup>a</sup> Shishak, the Sheshonk of the Egyptian monuments, "first sovereign of the Bubastite XXII<sup>nd</sup> dynasty." The great interest of Shishak's reign is that it contains the first clear and distinct account of an event which is also recorded in Scripture history. The two histories thus confirm each other, and determine the time of the events. At a later period, the Assyrian history supplies still more valuable confirmation of a like sort.

<sup>b</sup> Of these cities, a considerable number can be clearly identified as Levitical cities, within the territories of the ten tribes, viz., Tanaach in Issachar, Rehob in Asher, Mahanaim in Gad, Gibeon in Benjamin, Beth-horon in Ephraim, Kedemoth in Reuben, Aijalon in Dan, &c. The reduction of these cities must have greatly strengthened and consolidated the power of Jeroboam. See Rev. Stuart Poole's *Shishak* in Smith's Dictionary.

by motives of a worldly nature—viz., the fear of danger to his authority and his life ; and no divine warnings or judgments ever availed to make him reverse his policy. No doubt, after a time, the reversal would have been all but impossible. But there is nothing in Scripture to indicate that Jeroboam, or any of his successors, ever attempted a reversal. Then the corrupting system once established became inveterate. The calves of Bethel and Dan remained in their places till they were carried off, as spoils of war, to Assyria. With the exception of the very last (Hoshea), who had little in his power, every one of Jeroboam's successors "walked in the way of Jeroboam." Every one of them maintained the calf worship. The fact is noted at each fresh accession ; and the phrase, "who made Israel to sin," sticks to Jeroboam like a surname. Jeroboam's other unauthorised ordinances were equally inveterate, being only rooted out with the nation itself.

*Nadab, Second King of Israel (B.C. 954—B.C. 953).*

29. **SLAIN WITHIN TWO YEARS BY A USURPER** (1 Kings xv. 25). Nadab was apparently altogether unfit to cope with the difficulties of his position. He was only a weaker Jeroboam. He "walked in the ways of his father," and never, so far as appears, made even an attempt to abolish his father's schismatical system. He was thus left by God to his own devices and resources, and he speedily met the fate which awaits the weak successor of a powerful usurper.

Baasha, the son of Ahijah, of "the house of Issachar," a man apparently of humble origin, and also of an uninfluential tribe, but of commanding personal qualities, conspired against him, and smote him at Gibbethon—once a Levitical, but then a Philistine city, which Nadab and his army were besieging at the time.<sup>a</sup> With the usual cruel and selfish policy

<sup>a</sup> Gibbethon or Gabbatha is supposed to have been about 17 miles due west of Samaria. It had belonged to the Kohathite Levites (Josh.



of eastern usurpers, Baasha, to avoid the risk of a disputed succession, "smote all the house of Jeroboam; he left not to Jeroboam any that breathed." Thus was fulfilled to the letter the word of God through "his servant Ahijah the Shilonite."

## SECOND DYNASTY.

*Baasha, Third King of Israel* (B.C. 953—B.C. 930).

30. NO REFORMER BUT A SELFISH USURPER (1 Kings xv. 27). Baasha's motives in rebellion were, if possible, more glaringly selfish than even Jeroboam's. He does not appear to have been, in any sense, a reformer, least of all an ecclesiastical reformer. He continued the evil system of Jeroboam, and thus he inherited the curse of extermination. In fact, in the second dynasty, the history of the first repeats itself in every leading particular. To Baasha, as to Jeroboam, when his choice of the evil way became fixed, there came a message of doom from God through his prophet. This time the prophet was Jehu, the son of Hanani; and the message was, "I will make thy house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat; him that dieth of Baasha in the city the dogs shall eat; and him that dieth of his in the fields shall the fowls of the air eat." (1 Kings xvi. 4.)

31. BAASHA MAKES WAR ON JUDAH (1 Kings xv. 16 and 32). Like Jeroboam, Baasha seemed entirely to disregard this divine warning; and like him, as if independent of Jehovah, he made in his latter days (about the twelfth year of his reign) a determined attack upon the more faithful Judah. There had indeed been, ever since the separation, a chronic state of warfare between the two peoples; but this was apparently a deliberate attempt to sub-

xxi. 23), who probably abandoned it and emigrated to Judah when Jeroboam established his schismatical system. Their departure left the place open to the Philistines, on whose country it bordered.

due the southern realm. The immediate occasion or pretext was the desertion of Baasha's subjects to Asa. Desertion had indeed gone on from the first, of "such as set their hearts to seek Jehovah the God of Israel" (2 Chron. xi. 16). At this time "they fell to Asa out of Israel in great abundance" (2 Chron. xv. 9). Baasha took a step well calculated to check desertion. He built Ramah (El-Ram), a fortress on a high ground, about five miles from Jerusalem, and the same distance from Bethel, in the direct route between these two cities, and commanding every approach to Jerusalem from both north and east. In this position Baasha could soon have made Jerusalem untenable by Asa, and completely paralysed the action of his southern rival.

**32. ASA OBTAINS HELP FROM SYRIA AND REPELS THE INVASION** (1 Kings xv. 18). Asa felt himself unequal to the task of dislodging Baasha, and would not "rely upon Jehovah his God but on the king of Syria." He made a league with Ben-hadad, who "sent the captains of his armies against the cities of Israel, and they smote Ijon,<sup>a</sup> and Dan, and Abel-Maim,<sup>b</sup> and all the store cities of Naphtali." This prompt diversion in the north soon compelled Baasha to relinquish his hold of Ramah, which was immediately taken possession of by Asa, who, with the materials of it, built two other fortresses three miles further north, Geba (the height), and Mizpah (the outlook), as defences of his kingdom against Israel. Thus the result of Baasha's attack on Judah was like that of Jeroboam, the weakening rather than the strengthening of his kingdom. Ben-hadad, when his purpose was accomplished, probably restored the cities taken by him; but Israel was, by

<sup>a</sup> Ijon ("ruin"), supposed to have been situated in a beautiful plain, *Merj Ayun* or "Meadow of fountain," a few miles N.W. of Dan, the site being now indicated by a mound called *Tell Dibbin*.

<sup>b</sup> Abel-beth-Maacah or Abel Maim, "Abel on the waters," supposed to be the modern *Abel* in the *Ard-el-Huleh*, "the marshy meadow country, which drains into the sea of Merom."

this futile enterprise, left baffled and humbled, with one watchful enemy in the north, and another in the south. Baasha died in his capital Tirzah about a year after this defeat and humiliation, having reigned about twenty-four years.

*Elah, Fourth King of Israel (B.C. 930—929.)*

33. SLAIN AFTER DISSOLUTE REIGN OF TWO YEARS (1 Kings xvi. 8). Elah, like Nadab, the weak son of an able but unscrupulous father, reigned, like Nadab, only part of two years, and then like him was cut off by one of his own captains while his army, like Nadab's, was absent besieging the same city Gibbethon. Zimri, "captain of half his chariots, conspired against him, and slew him, when he was drinking himself drunk in the house of Arza, who was over his house in Tirzah." Then ensued a more than usually ruthless slaughter of relatives. As soon as he sat on the throne, "Zimri" slew all the house of Baasha; he left him not one male "neither of his kinfolks nor of his friends" (1 Kings xvi. 11). Thus, as in the case of the first dynasty, was the sure word of prophecy fulfilled to the letter. Obstinate persistence in a forbidden course ended in extermination.

*Zimri, Fifth King of Israel (B.C. 929.)*

34. NOMINAL KING FOR ONE WEEK (1 Kings xvi. 9). Zimri ranks as fifth king of Israel; but properly speaking he never ruled over Israel at all. He simply "reigned seven days in Tirzah," or held possession of the capital till the army had time to come from Gibbethon to dispossess him, which it did within a week. His usurpation was disowned as soon as it was reported to the army, and a successor to Elah was appointed by authority. "All Israel made Omri captain of the host, king over Israel that day in the camp." Omri quickly took the royal city, and

put an end to the career of Zimri. "When Zimri saw that the city was taken, he went into the citadel (or tower<sup>a</sup> of the king's house), and burnt the king's house over him with fire, and died" (1 Kings xvi. 18).

*Omri, Sixth King of Israel* (B.C. 929—918).

**35. CONTENTS FOUR YEARS FOR CROWN** (1 Kings xvi. 16). Omri had another rival to subdue before he obtained undisputed possession of the throne. "The people of Israel were divided into two parts: half followed Tibni, the son of Ginath, to make him king; and half followed Omri" (1 Kings xvi. 21). The struggle lasted four years. At last the party of Omri prevailed. "So Tibni died, and Omri reigned." How Tibni died is not said, but doubtless he either fell in battle, or perished by the hands of the executioner.<sup>b</sup>

**36. OMRI'S SERVICES TO THE NATION—MAKES SAMARIA THE CAPITAL** (1 Kings xvi. 24). Omri displayed not only might in war, but also, so far as can be judged from the short notice of his career, wisdom in administration. He did the state two important services. Two years after he became undisputed ruler he transferred the seat of government from the beautiful but now half ruined Tirzah to the central and commanding position of Samaria, which to the last continued to be the capital of the nation. Omri bought the hill on which the town was erected from a man named Shemer for two shekels of silver (£780); and he is said to have named the city after its former owner (Shomerôn) (1 Kings xvi. 24). It is likely, however, that he was partly led to the adoption of the name by its expressiveness, indicating as it does the great "watch"

<sup>a</sup> Some render the word "harem," and thus find a parallel between the mode of Zimri's death and that of Sardanapalus, the last king of the Assyrians. "Lofty fortress" or tower is, however, the more generally accepted rendering.

<sup>b</sup> Tibni is by some reckoned as one of the kings of Israel. He never, however, advanced beyond the position of claimant or aspirant.

mountain, or watch tower of the nation.<sup>a</sup> Samaria was indeed "singularly adapted both for observation and defence." It lay "about six miles north-west of Shechem," "on a commanding hill, rising from a broad valley, and surrounded on all sides by mountains, through which there was only a narrow entrance from the west." The hill was "steep on all sides." (Edersheim, p. 175.) This, then, was the first of Omri's great services to the nation, the transference of the capital to the hill of Samaria.

37. CONCLUDES PEACE (1 Kings xx. 34). This was his second great service. It is nowhere, however, expressly stated, but only inferred from certain statements in the narrative. Omri appears to have made peace both with Judah on the south and Syria on the north. In the case of Judah the wisdom of the step is evident. The chronic war between the two kindred nations had been very vexatious and exhausting to both, and advantageous only to the stranger who was called in occasionally to decide between them. It was probably not less wise to make peace with Syria, though Omri appears to have paid a rather high price for it.

1. He gave up to Ben-Hadad certain towns, mostly lying on the east of Jordan (1 Kings xx. 34),<sup>b</sup> Ramoth Gilead being apparently one (1 Kings xvii. 3).

2. He further yielded to the Syrian king the right to "make streets"<sup>c</sup> or have fixed quarters in Samaria for the residence of certain Syrian subjects, partly

<sup>a</sup> The Hebrew name means "pertaining to a watch." Samaria (or rather Samareia) is the Greek form. When Herod the Great rebuilt the city he named it *Sebaste* or *Augusta* after Augustus, who had given him the place; hence the modern name *Sebustiyeh*. In the earlier Assyrian inscriptions Samaria is always called the house or city of Omri (Beth-Khumri or Beth-Omri). It is not till the time of Tiglath Pileser, 200 years after Omri's time, that it begins to appear as *Sammarin*.

<sup>b</sup> "The cities which my father took from thy father I will restore," Benhadad II. to Ahab.

<sup>c</sup> Literally "open places" or "squares;" probably something like "Jews' quarters" in some European cities, as Rome.—*Vide* Speaker's Commentary, II., 608.

perhaps for political and partly for mercantile objects.

38. HIS RELIGIOUS POLICY (1 Kings xvi. 25 ; Micah vi. 10). In religious, as in civil matters, the Scriptural notices of Omri's policy are brief and vague. The only thing clear is that he made bad worse. Like almost all the other kings he "walked in the way of Jeroboam," but it is added that he "did worse than all that went before him." The only explanation given of this, his aggravation of the national apostacy, is a reference by the prophet Micah, who lived about the close of Israel's career as a nation, to "the statutes of Omri, which," he says, were "kept" even then (Micah vi. 10). Micah classes these statutes "with all the works of the house of Ahab." Hence doubtless they in some way gave increased support and countenance to idolatry, either extending and systematising the established calf-worship, or enjoining toleration of the worship of Baal. They carried the national apostacy a step further.

39. OMRI'S CHARACTER. On the whole, though not a good king, Omri was not exceptionally bad, except apparently in the one particular of the encouragement of idolatry. He appears to have ruled all classes of the people, including the priests, with a firm hand, yet without tyranny or cruelty. No such acts are ascribed to him as those which disgraced the reigns of Baasha and Zimri. Hence, though his policy is condemned, his dynasty is not doomed, as was that of Jeroboam and Baasha. His family continued to occupy the throne for three reigns.

#### QUESTIONS AND POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

1. *How was it that the divine judgments produced no good effect upon Jeroboam?*
2. *In what Egyptian monument do we find the first confirmation of the Scripture narrative?*

3. *What is the Scripture proof—running through the whole history—that the worship of the golden calves was kept up till the breaking up of the nation?*

4. *Specify the chief services of Omri to the nation.*

5. *What is supposed to have been the nature of “the statutes of Omri?”*

## CHAPTER III.

AHAB OR ACHAAB, SEVENTH KING OF ISRAEL  
(B.C. 918—898).

### 40. GREAT IMPORTANCE OF HIS REIGN.

Omri was succeeded by his son Ahab, whose reign, though the most wicked and scandalous of all the nineteen, is yet on the whole the most interesting. It forms an epoch in the annals of the nation, marking the lowest point of the national apostacy, and the completion of the appalling work of national corruption begun by Jeroboam. The record is crowded with stirring events, which give a vivid insight into the characters of the chief actors, and the workings of God's providence in correction and judgment.

41. AHAB'S FIRST AND FATAL MISTAKE (1 Kings xvi. 31). Like Jeroboam Ahab began his career by committing a ruinous blunder and crime. He, the head of God's chosen people of the north, took to wife the daughter of a royal priest of the Phœnician Baal—“Jezebel, daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Zidonians”—a woman cradled in idolatry of the grossest type, and personally of a fanatical, cruel, and domineering temper. This was a fatal step on the part of Ahab. It was taking into his house and his kingdom the worst influence and the worst example, and Ahab had neither the faith nor the strength of mind to resist the evil. Jezebel had her

own way in everything, and speedily under her influence idolatry and tyranny became rampant in Israel.

42. **ESTABLISHMENT OF IDOLATRY** (1 Kings xvi. 31). The first thing that is related of Ahab after his marriage with Jezebel is his establishment of the worship of Jezebel's gods. He "went and served the Baal, and worshipped him. And he reared up an altar for the Baal, in the house of Baal, which he built in Samaria; and Ahab made the Asherah." The "Asherah" was the straight tree or the wooden pillar, which formed the symbol or image of Ashtoreth, the goddess of the Zidonians, corresponding to which was the column representing Baal the Zidonian god. In or near the "house of Baal" were both these idolatrous symbols, and every other means and appliance of the corrupt Zidonian worship. There were 450 priests of Baal, and 400 priests of the Asherah or Ashtoreth. These all "ate at Jezebel's table," that is, they lived at the public expense. Thus "Ahab did more to provoke Jehovah" than ever Jeroboam did. He trained the people to a direct breach of the first commandment as well as of the second.

43. **PERSECUTION OF THE TRUE FAITH** (1 Kings xviii. 13, xix. 10). While thus establishing a false worship, Ahab and Jezebel persecuted the true. This persecution is referred to rather than described. Jezebel threw down the altars of Jehovah and slew His prophets with the sword, and Obadiah, Ahab's godly steward, "hid them by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water." Thus there was no longer in Israel so much as toleration for the worship of the God of Israel. The national apostacy had reached its limit. Judgment must begin. It came in a striking way.

44. **MISSION OF ELIJAH THE TISHBITE** (1 Kings xvii.). Elijah the Tishbite, the greatest of all the prophets of Israel, "the grandest and most romantic character that Israel ever produced," sud-



denly appears upon the scene, as if a scourge of God, specially raised up and provided for the crisis. Without preface or explanation, he stands forward and in God's name hurls at Ahab a startling and threatening message. "As Jehovah the God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but at the utterance of my word." Doubtless Ahab knew more of the prophet than is told of him here, viz., that he was a Tishbite and of the inhabitants of Gilead,<sup>a</sup> else he could not have been expected to listen to such a message. From his peculiar dress and appearance the prophet was probably well known and readily recognised in Samaria. He was "a lord of hair," wearing long flowing locks with a robe of camel's hair and a leathern girdle about his loins. Ahab doubtless knew him to be a prophet of God, and for the time he could not fail to be seriously impressed by his message. But the effect was not lasting. A mere threat was no sufficient deterrent for Ahab, still less for Jezebel. After the first shock of surprise was over, the first thought of Jezebel doubtless was how to punish this bold prophet of evil.

45. ELIJAH WITHDRAWS TO CHERITH (1 Kings xvii. 3). The word of Jehovah to Elijah "therefore was to withdraw to the brook or Wady Cherith,<sup>b</sup> in the face of the Jordan"—an unfrequented spot probably on the eastern side of the river. There he was safe from Ahab and Jezebel. Except, however, that he could drink of the brook, "there was no sustenance for him." But he was in safe keeping. "I have commanded the ravens," said

<sup>a</sup> The only thing certain from this description is that Elijah was, or had been, a dweller in Gilead. The words translated, "Tishbite" and "inhabitants," are exactly the same without the points. Whether the prophet was a native of Tishbi, in Gilead, or of a possible Thisbe in Napthali, is a question that cannot be satisfactorily settled.

<sup>b</sup> Cherith has not yet been satisfactorily identified. Robinson thinks it is the "*Wady Kelt* behind Jericho;" others the "*Wady el Yobis* (Jabesh)." It probably lay on the east side of the Jordan in Elijah's own district.

Jehovah," to bring thee bread and flesh in the morning and bread and flesh in the evening." After a time, however, under the influence of the drought, the brook became dry. The prophet's Almighty Provider could have overcome this difficulty; but he made a different provision for him. Change of place was doubtless desirable for several reasons.

46. ELIJAH REMOVES TO ZAREPHATH (1 Kings xvii. 8). Jehovah therefore sent his faithful prophet to the other side of the land of Judah, and into the territories of another king, to Zarephath or Sarepta, <sup>a</sup> a city of Sidon in the kingdom of Ethbaal, the father of Jezebel; where the famine prevailed as much as anywhere, and where it was necessary again to sustain the prophet by a continuous miracle. "I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee." This was the divine assurance on the faith of which Elijah set out. Of course at that trying time a widow woman could do little even to sustain her own household. But the prophet knew that Jehovah could accomplish his purposes through the humblest instrumentality. So he went to Zarephath. "When he came to the gate of the city, behold the widow woman was there gathering of sticks." Elijah asked her to fetch him a little water and also a morsel of bread. The prophet was probably not altogether ignorant of the real extent of his seemingly small request. He was asking the widow's last morsel. "As Jehovah, thy God, liveth," she said, "I have not a cake, but a handful of meal in a barrel, <sup>b</sup> and a little oil in a cruse, and behold I am gathering two sticks that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it and die."

<sup>a</sup> Zarephath lay on the coast road between Tyre and Sidon, not far from the modern village of Sûrafend. The village seems to have changed its place since the 11th century, and is "now more than a mile from the coast, high up on the slope of a hill" (Robinson, 474).

<sup>b</sup> "Barrel" does not give a correct idea of the small vessel which contained the widow's scanty store. Pail or bucket is a more exact rendering, and also conveys a better notion of the *smallness* of the remnants.

“Fear not,” said the prophet. “Go do as thou hast said, but make me thereof a little cake first, and after make for thee and thy son.” There was no risk of want. “For thus saith Jehovah God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, nor the cruse of oil fail, till the day that the Lord shall give rain on the face of the earth.” The simple Gentile woman had faith in the prophet’s word. His venerable appearance, the power of his Master the God of Israel, well known to neighbouring peoples, and the secret influence of the divine command on her heart, all impelled her to obey. She did as she was bid, and she had her ample reward in prolonged life to herself and household. The prophet’s word all came true. The barrel of meal did not waste, and the cruse of oil did not fail till rain and plenty came on the earth. The prophet, the widow, and her household ate of this scanty but unwasting store for days.

47. ELIJAH RESTORES THE WIDOW’S SON TO LIFE AND HEALTH (1 Kings xvii. 17). A second time the prophet’s aid warded off death from the widow’s door. The widow’s son “fell sick, and his sickness was so sore, that there was no breath left in him.” Apparently he was not dead, but at the point of death. The widow fancied that the prophet had somehow brought this calamity upon her. “O thou man of God, art thou come to call my sin to remembrance and slay my son?” He took the child from her bosom, carried him in his arms up to his own bed, stretched himself three times upon him, and cried to Jehovah, “Oh Jehovah, my God, let this child’s soul come into him again. Jehovah heard the voice of Elijah, and the child’s soul came into him again, and he lived.” This miracle apparently completed the conversion of the widow and her household to the true faith. <sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> The tradition of the early Church was that the widow’s son became the pupil and attendant of Elijah, accompanied him to Beer-sheba on his way to the wilderness, was sent by his successor Elisha to anoint Hazael, and eventually became the prophet Jonah, son of Amittai—the preacher of repentance to the men of Nineveh,

48. ELIJAH SHEWS HIMSELF TO AHAB (1 Kings xviii.). The drought had now prevailed for nearly three years in the land, and had reduced the whole nation to the utmost extremity. Apparently it had sufficiently done its work in preparing the hearts of prince and people to respond to the life and death appeal, which Elijah had been raised up to make to them. "In the third year, therefore, the word of Jehovah to Elijah was, Go show thyself to Ahab, and I will bring rain on the face of the earth." The prophet went. So sore was the famine that Ahab and Obadiah had gone out in different directions through the land, "Unto all fountains of water, and unto all brooks," to see if peradventure they might "find grass to save the horses and mules alive." Ahab and Obadiah went each his own way, and Elijah met the latter. The godly steward was awe-struck at the sight of the great prophet. He "fell on his face, and said, Art thou that my lord Elijah?" The answer was, "I am. Go tell thy Lord, behold Elijah." This injunction filled Obadiah with terror. To his mind, it was certain death to convey such a message to Ahab. Ahab had searched everywhere for Elijah; he had nowhere found him. He would not find him now nor here. As soon as "I am gone from thee," said Obadiah to the prophet, "the Spirit of Jehovah shall carry thee whither I know not; and so when I come and tell Ahab, and he cannot find thee, he will slay me, and I thy servant fear Jehovah from my youth." Elijah gave Obadiah a solemn assurance on this head. "As Jehovah of hosts liveth before whom I stand, I will certainly show myself to him this day." Obadiah then went and told Ahab. Ahab came and greeted the prophet with a bold front. "Art thou that troubler of Israel?" "I have not troubled Israel," said Elijah, "But thou and thy father's house." This was no mere recrimination. Elijah added the palpable proofs of his statement—viz., the forsaking of the

commandments of Jehovah, and the going after Baals.

49. ELIJAH EXPOSES THE BAALITE IMPOSTURE (1 Kings xviii. 19). Ahab doubtless quailed under the stern rebuke of Elijah. Anyhow, the time for action was come, and the prophet at once assumed an air of authority becoming his mission—"Send," said he to Ahab, "and gather to me all Israel to Mount Carmel, and the prophets of the Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the Asherah <sup>a</sup> four hundred, that eat at Jezebel's table." Ahab complied. People and priests were assembled, and Elijah stepped forward and challenged the priests of Baal to a crucial test of their idol's power and claims in presence of king, court, and people—an ordeal from which it was impossible for them to shrink. Two bullocks were provided for sacrifice—one for Elijah and the other for the priests of Baal. The priests were to cut their bullock "in pieces and lay it on wood, and put no fire under." Elijah was to do the same with his bullock. Then the priests were to "call on the name of their god," and Elijah was to call "on the name of Jehovah," and the result was to decide which was the true God. "The God that answereth by fire," said Elijah, "let him be the God; and all the people answered and said, The word is good." The priests of Baal having "dressed" their bullock, "called on the name of the Baal from morning even till noon, saying, O Baal, answer us, but there was no voice nor any that answered." Then they "leaped on the altar;" and when Elijah mockingly urged them to persevere, they "cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them." They continued their frantic but fruitless exertions till the evening sacrifice. Elijah then desiring the people to draw near, repaired "the altar of Jehovah that was

<sup>a</sup> The image or symbol of Ashtoreth.

broken down,"<sup>a</sup> "building" it up with twelve stones, according to the number of the twelve tribes of undivided Israel. When the altar was duly finished, he prepared the sacrifice, and then as if to put beyond all doubt the impossibility of fraud, he made the people pour water on altar and sacrifice, till the water ran round the altar and filled the trench. Then he drew near and raised his voice to Heaven in prayer, "Jehovah, God of Abraham, of Isaac, and Israel, hear me, Jehovah hear me this day in fire, and let all this people know that thou art Jehovah, the God of Israel, and that I am thy servant, and have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, Jehovah, hear me." The prophet was heard and answered on the instant. "Fire fell from Jehovah from heaven," and "consumed," as no earthly fire could have consumed, not only the sacrifice but the very altar itself—stones and dust—it even "licked up the water that was in the trench."

The people saw and were convinced. They "fell on their faces and said, Jehovah, he is the God—Jehovah, he is the God." A staggering blow was struck at idolatry. For the time, at least, there was no more halting between truth and error. But the teachers of error, the 450 priests of Baal, still lived. Elijah ordered them to be seized for execution. "Let not one of them escape."<sup>b</sup>

50. THE DROUGHT CEASES (1 Kings xviii. 41). Jehovah having been appeased by "the turning of the people's hearts" to him again, the plague of drought ceased. "Go up, eat and drink," said Elijah to Ahab, "for there is the sound of the feet of rain." The prophet put himself in a listening, expectant attitude, and then sent his boy, time after time, to the top of Carmel, to look for signs of the coming

<sup>a</sup> There had evidently been an old Israelitish shrine at Carmel, as at Bethel, Shechem, Mizpeh, &c.

<sup>b</sup> The 400 priests of Ashtoreth are not said to have been slain on his occasion,

rain. Six times the boy went and saw nothing. The seventh time, there was "a cloud like a man's hand." "Go up," said Elijah, "say unto Ahab, prepare (thy chariot), and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not." There was need for haste, for soon "the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain." Ahab made haste—and the "hand of the Lord was on Elijah, and he girded up his loins and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel."<sup>a</sup>

51. ELIJAH FLIES TO HOREB (1 Kings xix.). Elijah's triumph was far from complete. Amid all the turning of the people's hearts to God, Jezebel, the ruling spirit of the nation, remained unmoved except to evil. No sooner had Ahab told her all that Elijah had done to her idolatrous priests, than she vowed instant vengeance on the prophet. She said, "So let the gods do (to me), and more also, if I make not thy life, as the life of one of them by to-morrow about this time."<sup>b</sup>

To an ordinary man of Israel such a threat from Jezebel might well be fraught with terror. To a prophet of God—engaged in God's high and special work, and specially upheld and shielded as Elijah had been, it should have been as nothing. But judging from what follows, this truculent threat seemed to the prophet but as one of many dark elements in the gloomy prospect. Everything appeared to have gone wrong at once. The religious reform so auspiciously commenced suddenly collapsed. Baal was again in the ascendant. To the prophet, in fact, the cause of Jehovah seemed hopelessly lost, and he himself wholly deserted and alone in Israel; and he lost heart and hope. "He arose and went for his life." He "came to Beersheba" at the southern extremity

<sup>a</sup> The action of Elijah on this occasion has been compared to that of "the Bedouin of his native Gilcad" at the present day.—Stanley, "Jewish Church," vol. ii. p. 306.

<sup>b</sup> In the Septuagint, the language of the vow is expressed with yet more fierce determination. If "or as sure as thou art Elijah, and I am Jezebel, so may God do to me," &c.

of Judah. But even there, he did not rest. He left his boy (supposed to be the widow's son of Zarephath) and went alone "a day's journey into the wilderness." Overcome with fatigue he "came and sat under" a solitary wilderness bush,<sup>a</sup> and prayed for himself that he might die. It is enough now, O Jehovah, take away my life; for I am not better than my my fathers." The fatherly care of Jehovah for his faithful but wayward servant was now opportunely displayed. Sleep came to his relief, "and as he lay and slept" an "angel of Jehovah" twice touched and woke him, and twice made him arise eat and drink, adding, the second time, "for the journey is too great for thee." It was not a continuation of his aimless flight that the angel meant by "journey," but a journey with a purpose—a journey to the sacred mount where Jehovah had delivered the Law to his people, and where He might now, with due impressiveness, administer to his erring and mistaken servant, the needful correction and enlightenment. The prophet complied. "He arose, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights to Horeb the mount of God."

52. ELIJAH'S VISION OF JEHOVAH (1 Kings xix. 9). Arrived at Horeb, the prophet "lodged in the cave"—doubtless some well-known cavern, "and behold the word of Jehovah (came) to him." The word was simple, yet deep and searching—"What doest thou here Elijah?" *Here*, in the far desert, away, without leave, from the post of duty? "What doest thou here?" Elijah was not in the mood to receive the rebuke with due submissiveness. In self-justification he broke out into exaggerated complaints. "I have been very jealous for Jehovah, God of Hosts, for the children of Israel have for-

<sup>a</sup> "Under one Rothem"—not as in the A. V. "a juniper tree," but a flowering broom, a species of shrub which abounds in the Sinaitic peninsula, and which is known to the Arabs by a name which is substantially the same.



saken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword, and I, I only am left; and they seek my life to take it away." The immediate answer to the prophet was not given in words, but in a visible and audible manifestation of God's ways—mysterious, but to the inspired prophetic mind doubtless most expressive. When he went forth and stood, as directed, on the Mount, "behold Jehovah passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before Jehovah; Jehovah (was) not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake; Jehovah was not in the earthquake; and after the earthquake a fire; Jehovah was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice." The "still small voice," or "the voice of a gentle breath"<sup>a</sup> was, to the prophet the sure token of the divine presence, and he became all reverence and attention. He "wrapped his face in his mantle," and stood to hear. He heard again the simple searching question, "What doest thou here Elijah?" Its repetition was significant. The embarrassed prophet could only answer in the same evasive words of complaint and apology, "I have been very jealous," &c. His divine Master took no direct notice of the words the second time any more than the first; but, as if they were mere words of excuse, proceeded to lay on his servant fresh tasks for the good of his people, assuring him, that instead of universal apostacy in Israel, "Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him." "Go," was the order, "return on thy way to the wilderness of Damascus."

There, he was to anoint one king (Jehu the son of Nimshi) for Apostate Israel, and another—Hazael—for Gentile Syria; and, further, he was to appoint

<sup>a</sup> Septuagint version. In the whole action, as well as in the words of the vision, there is conveyed a lesson of gentleness, tolerance, and charity, not only to Elijah, but to men of all time.

as a prophet in his own "room" Elisha, the son of Shaphat of Abel-Meholah; three men of power and might, through whom the work of reform or correction would be vigorously carried on in Israel.

53. ELIJAH AGAIN DENOUNCES AHAB — THE CASE OF NABOTH (1 Kings xxi.). Apparently the time was not yet come for anointing Jehu and Hazael. Ahab had not yet filled up the measure of his iniquities. The time was at hand however; and Elijah, as usual, appeared on the scene at the critical moment. What called him forth from his retirement was the judicial murder of Naboth. Naboth had a vineyard close to Ahab's favourite palace of Jezreel. Ahab wished to have this vineyard for a garden, and he offered either to buy it, or to give Naboth a better vineyard in exchange for it. Naboth refused to part with his vineyard on any terms—partly, it would seem, from religious scruples, partly from respect to his ancestors. Ahab at first submitted to the disappointment, and, in fact, behaved weakly rather than wickedly. He "laid him down in his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no bread." But Jezebel, his evil genius, roused him. "Dost thou now govern Israel? Arise and eat bread, and let thine heart be merry. *I* will give thee the vineyard of Naboth the Israelite." How Jezebel would give him the vineyard, Ahab must have known only too well. Yet he did not hesitate to let her act in his name, and use his royal seal. Through the aid of false witnesses, Jezebel quickly succeeded in getting the innocent Naboth condemned for blasphemy and treason, then stoned to death, and his property forfeited to the crown. There was then nothing between Ahab and the coveted vineyard. "Arise," said Jezebel, "and take possession." Ahab did rise "to go down to the vineyard." He was accompanied, it would appear (2 Kings ix. 25) by Jehu and Bidkar, his captains; but horror rather than triumph awaited him. By "the word of Jehovah" Elijah was in the vineyard to meet him;

and, in God's name, denounce against him and his house utter ruin and destruction. "Hast thou killed and also taken possession?" said Elijah. Ahab's conscience smote him at once. "Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?" said he. "I have found thee," said Elijah; and then the prophet delivered to him his message of doom, the same as that pronounced against the house of Jeroboam, and that of Baasha, and fulfilled to the letter, viz., complete extinction; a special clause being added concerning Jezebel, the prime mover of the iniquitous policy. "Of Jezebel also spake Jehovah, saying, the dogs shall eat Jezebel by the ditch of Jezreel."

54. AHAB REPENTS (1 Kings xxi. 27). It does not appear that the doom of extinction produced any good effect on Jeroboam or on Baasha. On Ahab it produced a markedly good effect; and this is one of several proofs that, naturally, Ahab was not a wicked man, but only weak and easily misled. When Ahab heard Elijah's words, "he rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his face, and fasted, and lay in sackcloth, and went softly." The consequence of this repentance was the postponement of the evil day. "I will not bring the evil in his days; but in his son's days will I bring the evil upon his house" (1 Kings xxi. 29).

55. AHAB'S SYRIAN WARS—FIRST (DEFENSIVE) (1 Kings xx). The chief external foe of Israel during the reign of Ahab, and indeed of all the kings of the house of Omri, was the Syrian power of Damascus.<sup>a</sup>

Ben-hadad<sup>b</sup> was king at that time, and with him

<sup>a</sup> Damascus, "the oldest city in the world," was at this period the chief city in Syria. From its unique position in a well-watered and most fertile plain, about thirty miles in diameter, surrounded by bare hills and burning deserts, it is, and ever must be, a place of great importance.

<sup>b</sup> Ben-hadad II. (or Hadad IV.). Hadad or Adad or Ader was a Syrian deity, supposed to be the sun; and Ben-hadad, or son of Hadad, appears to have been rather "a religious title" than the specific name of the kings of Syria. Hadad-ezer (Hadad has helped) is a corresponding title or name. Hazael's son is called, not Ben-Hazael, but Ben-hadad. See p. 78.

Ahab waged three wars—two defensive and successful, the third and last offensive and disastrous. In the defensive wars Ahab enjoyed the help of Jehovah and the guidance of his prophets; in the offensive war he shut his ears to the divine warnings and rushed upon his fate.

Ben-hadad's army was so superior to Ahab's, not only in numbers, but also in equipment, being particularly strong, where Israel was always weak, viz., in chariots and horses, that the Syrian king plainly thought that Ahab would never risk an engagement with him. He despised his enemy with the usual result. He sent Ahab three consecutive messages, each succeeding one more arrogant and insulting than the former.

1. The first message was, "thy silver and thy gold is mine; thy wives also and thy children, even the goodliest." Ahab possibly regarded this message as not seriously hostile. He replied: "My lord, O king, I am thine, and all that I have."<sup>a</sup>

2. In his second message Ben-hadad's demand extended to the property of Ahab's servants as well as to his own, and it also left no doubt as to the meaning of the first message. It was, "I will send my servants unto thee to-morrow about this time, and they shall search thine house, and the houses of thy servants, and whatever is pleasant in thine eyes they shall put it in their hand, and take it away." On receiving this message, Ahab consulted with the elders, and by their advice he sent Ben-hadad a civil but firm refusal—"This thing I may not do."

3. Ahab's refusal drew from Ben-hadad the boastful threat: "The gods do so unto me, and more also, if the dust of Samaria shall suffice for handfuls for all the people that are at my feet." Ahab replied with dignity and spirit, "Tell him, let not him that

<sup>a</sup> It is a common eastern compliment for a host to assure his guest that his house, with everything that belongs to him, is his. See *Layard's Nineveh*, I. 73-92.

girdeth on (his harness) boast himself as he that putteth it off" (1 Kings xx. 11). War followed instantly. Ben-hadad, who was "drinking in the pavilion" with his two and thirty tributary kings, gave orders at once to prepare for action. Ahab found opportune encouragement. A prophet drew near to him, "saying, thus saith Jehovah, hast thou seen all this great multitude? Behold, I will deliver it into thine hand this day." "By whom?" said Ahab. "By the young men of the princes of the provinces." "Who shall order the battle?" "Thou," answered the prophet. Ahab followed the prophet's instructions to the letter. The "young men" were sent out "at noon," the sultry hours when the dissipated Syrian king was "drinking himself drunk." Hearing that a handful of youths were coming out of Samaria against him, he gave orders that they should be taken alive, whatever their object might be, "whether peace or war." An over-confident attempt to execute this order brought—in some way not distinctly indicated in the narrative—confusion and disaster on the Syrian army. The young men made a determined resistance, slaying repeatedly, it would seem, "every one his man," and furnishing an opportunity to the body of the Israelitish army (7000 men) to come out and take the Syrians at a disadvantage. The result was a great defeat of the Syrians. Ben-hadad escaped on horseback.

56. AHAB'S SECOND (DEFENSIVE) CAMPAIGN (1 Kings xx. 22). This great victory was not decisive. "A prophet came" to warn Ahab that it would not be so. "Go, strengthen thyself . . . for at the return of the year the king of Syria will come up against thee." It was not in nature that the Syrians, having such superiority of force, should submit to defeat. Neither was it to be expected that, with their narrow idolatrous notions, they should ascribe their defeat to the true cause. Ben-hadad's servants "said to him, their gods are gods

of the hills,<sup>a</sup> therefore they were stronger than we; let us fight them in the plain." The advice was good, however mistaken the grounds of it; for it was only on the plain that the Syrians could turn to account their great superiority in chariots and horses. Another good advice was given to Ben-hadad by his servants, viz., that he should substitute "captains" for vassal kings as officers of his auxiliary forces. The king acted on this advice, and at the return of the year "he numbered the Syrians, and went up to Aphek" (1 Kings xx. 26).

"The children of Israel were numbered, and were all present, and went against them, and were pitched before them," doubtless on the hills to the south of the great plain on which the Syrians encamped, "like two little flocks of kids."<sup>b</sup> "The Syrians filled the country;" and there seemed small hope for the "two little flocks." But again the battle was not for the strong. Again a "man of God" came and assured the king of Israel that Jehovah would "deliver all this great multitude into his hand." By a second and yet greater overthrow on the plain, Jehovah would dispel from the Syrian mind the narrow and sceptical notions prevalent as to the extent of His power. This was done, but how is not said. The two armies "pitched one over against the other, seven days," each apparently refusing, as long as possible, to abandon the ground best suited to its forces. How at last the battle took place does not appear; but when it did, "the children of Israel slew of the Syrians a hundred thousand footmen in one day." "The rest fled to Aphek, into the city,

<sup>a</sup> This is a good illustration of the idea that was entertained at this time of all "the gods of the nations," viz., that the power of each was limited to a particular territory and to particular modes of action. As the people of Israel inhabited a hilly country, it was supposed that Jehovah, their God, was powerful only on the hills.

<sup>b</sup> It is probable that a body of the men of Judah had come to the assistance of Israel on this occasion, as they did in the next Syrian war. Hence the two bands or "little flocks."

where a wall fell upon twenty and seven thousand men." The king Ben-hadad "fled and came into the city into an inner chamber." He was completely in Ahab's power, but through his servants he made an effectual appeal to Ahab's clemency.

His servants "girded sackcloth on their loins, and put ropes on their heads," and coming to Ahab they said, "Thy servant Ben-hadad saith, I pray thee, let me live." "And he said, is he yet alive, he is my brother."

"They said, thy brother Ben-hadad. Then he said, go ye bring him. Then Ben-hadad came forth to him; and he caused him to come up into the chariot."

57. AHAB CONCLUDES A TREATY WITH BEN-HADAD (1 Kings xx. 34). In order to obtain his release Ben-hadad offered Ahab the same terms of peace as those which his own father, Ben-hadad the first, had extorted from Ahab's father, Omri. "The cities which my father took from thy father I will restore; and thou shalt make streets for thee in Damascus, as my father made in Samaria." Then (said Ahab) "I will send thee away with this covenant." It was creditable to Ahab's clemency, but it was a mistake in policy to deal thus leniently with the redoubtable hereditary foe of his house. The grave character of the mistake which he had committed was speedily brought home to him. "A certain man of the sons of the prophets" conveyed to him, through an elaborate acted parable (1 Kings xx. 35-43), an inspired forecast of the consequences, viz., ruin to both prince and people of Israel—"Thy life shall go for his life, and thy people for his people." How this prophecy was fulfilled will now be seen.

#### QUESTIONS AND POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

1. *What is it that lends to the history of Ahab's reign its great interest?*

2. *Distinguish between "the sin of Jeroboam" and that of Ahab in perverting the people.*

3. *Is there any proof from the history that Elijah, the stern and uncompromising scourge of idolaters, was yet a man of tender and kindly feelings?*

4. *Show how the different incidents in the affair of Naboth bring out the good and the evil points of Ahab's character.*

5. *In what arm of the military service were the Israelites greatly deficient as compared with the Syrians?*

6. *Does the fact of this deficiency help to explain the title which was given to Elijah and Elisha of "the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof"?*

---

## CHAPTER IV.

### REIGNS OF AHAB, SEVENTH KING (CONTINUED), AHAZIAH, AND JORAM.

58. **AHAB'S THIRD CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE SYRIANS** (1 Kings xxii.). In the third year after the battle of Aphek, Ahab determined to renew the war with Syria, by laying siege to the important fortress of Ramoth Gilead<sup>a</sup> on the eastern side of the Jordan, on the great Syrian road. "Know ye," he said to his servants, "that Ramoth in Gilead is ours, and we be still and take it not out of the hands of the King of Syria." How it was theirs does not appear quite clear. Probably Ramoth Gilead was one of the cities which had been taken from Omri, and which Ben-hadad promised to restore at Aphek. Once set free, the Syrian king doubtless found some pretext for refusing to deliver up the great strong-

<sup>a</sup> Ramoth Gilead, or "the heights of Gilead," supposed to be the same as Ramath Mispah (the height of the outlook), which again is believed to be the place where Jacob made his covenant with Laban by piling up a heap of stones, which heap was called both Gilead (heap of witness), and Mispah, (outlook, or watch-tower). This pile "became the great sanctuary of the regions east of Jordan."



hold ; and Ahab could not hope to wrest it from him without the help of an ally. He had now obtained a powerful ally, the good Jehoshaphat. For the first time in the history of the divided nation, a king of Judah came to visit the King of Israel. The two monarchs were most friendly. "Wilt thou go with me to battle to Ramoth Gilead?" said Ahab. "I am as thou art, my people as thy people, my horses as thy horses," said Jehoshaphat. But the pious Jehoshaphat could not think of leading the people of God on an important and dangerous expedition without first ascertaining God's will. "Ascertain, I pray thee, the word of Jehovah to-day," said he to Ahab. Ahab readily complied. He "gathered the prophets together, about four hundred men, and said unto them, Shall I go up against Ramoth Gilead to battle, or shall I forbear? And they said, Go up, for the Lord shall deliver it into the hand of the king." Such a promise from four hundred prophetic mouths ought to have been ample assurance to all concerned. But no, Jehoshaphat was not satisfied. There was something about these so-called prophets which excited his suspicions ; and, so far indeed, as appears, they belonged to the class of flattering soothsayers. "Is there not here," said he, "a prophet of Jehovah besides, that we may inquire of him?" "There is yet one man," said Ahab, "Micaiah the son of Imlah, but I hate him, for he doth not prophecy good concerning me, but evil." It is evident that Micaiah was the only true prophet in Samaria. He was sent for, and exhorted by the messenger to "declare good unto the king," like the others ; but only "what Jehovah said," unto him would he "speak." He was brought before the two kings, who "sat each on his throne, having put on their robes, in a void place in the entrance of the gate of Samaria ;" while Zedekiah, the son of Chenaanah, who "had made him horns of iron," was showing Ahab how, according to Jehovah, he would "push the Syrians" till he had "consumed them," "and all

the prophets prophesied so," "saying, go up . . . and prosper." "Micaiah," said Ahab, "shall we go up against Ramoth Gilead to battle, or shall we forbear?" "Go and prosper," said Micaiah, derisively imitating the false prophets. An ironical and mocking answer could not satisfy either of the kings; and Ahab, though he would not follow Jehovah's will, seemed eager to know it. He adjured Micaiah to tell him what was true. So adjured, the prophet revealed the plain unvarnished truth. He recounted two prophetic visions which had been given to him; one revealing the entrance of a "lying spirit" unto the mouths of Ahab's prophets to persuade him to "go up and fall at Ramoth Gilead;" the other foreshadowing the death of Ahab and the dispersion of his army. "I saw all Israel scattered upon the hills as sheep that have not a shepherd, and Jehovah said, These have no master, let them return every man to his house in peace" (1 Kings xxii. 17). Doubtless that solemn warning came home to the misguided king, for Ahab evidently had more faith in the one prophet of evil than in all the four hundred prophets of good. But his was not a saving faith, but only a disquieting one. He had not the moral courage to turn back, in face of the evil influences which were egging him on, so he put a bold face on the matter. "Put this fellow in prison," he said, "until I come in peace." "If thou return at all in peace," said Micaiah, "Jehovah hath not spoken by me" (verse 28). With these ominous words in his ears, Ahab went up to Ramoth Gilead. There he seems to have learnt that the King of Syria had commanded his thirty and two captains "to fight neither with small nor great, but only with the King of Israel." Thus warned and threatened by prophet and king, Ahab took precautions for his personal safety. "He disguised himself and went into the battle" (verse 36). The disguise saved him from direct attack. There was a rush against King Jehoshaphat, who, by Ahab's desire, "put on his

robes ;” but no one seemed to aim a blow at Ahab. The blow fell nevertheless. “A man drew a bow at a venture,” or without aiming at any one in particular “and smote Ahab between the joints of his harness.”<sup>a</sup> “Turn thine hand,” said Ahab to his charioteer, “and carry me out of the host, for I am wounded.” It was only, it would appear, till his wound should be dressed, that Ahab withdrew from the field. For it is added, “The battle rose higher that day, and Ahab was stayed up<sup>b</sup> in his chariot against the Syrians.” With kingly and indomitable spirit he continued, in spite of his wound, to head his troops, till night separated the combatants. He “died at even.” His death, as he had foreseen, was the signal for the dispersion of his army. “The herald of the army proclaimed at the going down of the sun—every man to his city, and every man to his country.”<sup>c</sup>

Ahab was buried at Samaria, apparently with all due respect; yet “the dogs licked his blood,” as Elijah had foretold. The chariot in which he fought was soaked with blood, for “the blood ran out of the wound into the midst of the chariot.”

The chariot was washed in the Pool of Samaria, “and the dogs licked up his blood.”

59. CHARACTER OF AHAB. The reign of Ahab is the most interesting of all the nineteen, not only from the greatness of its events, but also from the graphic way in which the events are told. The king’s character is also more clearly brought out, and in spite of grievous sins it is perhaps the most striking character. We obtain occasional glimpses into Ahab’s feelings and motives; and we cannot help seeing that, to a great extent, he was the victim of circumstances. His marriage to the fierce Baal-worshipping Zidonian princess was doubtless chiefly

<sup>a</sup> Or, according to others, “between the groin and the breast-bone”

<sup>b</sup> “Standing erect” (Sept.).

<sup>c</sup> The Sept., 1 Kings xxii. 36, adds the clause, “for the king is dead,” which is manifestly implied in the proclamation.

his father's act—and from that act flowed all the worst crimes and calamities, the oppressions, cruelties, and idolatries of Ahab's reign. Ahab had not strength of mind to withstand this powerful, constant, and misleading influence. Away from Jezebel, and under good influence—as with Elijah at Carmel, and in Naboth's vineyard—Ahab readily humbled himself before God, repented and walked softly. And as to the chief charge against Ahab, his apostacy from Jehovah, many facts—such as the names borne by his sons and his prophets—combine to prove that it was only temporary and partial. “Ahab served Baal a little,” but he nevertheless generally regarded Jehovah as his God, and the God of Israel.

*Ahaziah, Eighth King of Israel.*

(B.C. 898—896.)

60. WEAK AND SUPERSTITIOUS—REBUKED BY ELIJAH (1 Kings xxii. 51, 2 Kings i.). Ahab was succeeded by his son Ahaziah (Jehovah sustains), whose reign did not last two years. Ahaziah did nothing memorable, and the only event which signalised his brief reign was the last active intervention of Elijah, which was called forth by the weak monarch's superstitious folly. Ahaziah was more decidedly idolatrous and apostate than any of his predecessors. He not only “walked in the way of his father” and “of his mother,” and “of Jeroboam”; he not only “served Baal and worshipped him,” but in his greatest emergency he had recourse to Baalzebub, the fly-god of Ekron. Nothing prospered with him. Under his reign Israel lost territory and tribute. The Moabites rebelled. Conquered by David, they had, at the division of the nation, remained in connection with Israel; and at this time were paying a tribute of “100,000 rams and 100,000 lambs with their wool.” But after the battle of Ramoth Gilead, the Syrians obtained possession of the country to the east of Jordan, and cut the com-

munications between Israel and Moab, and Moab took the opportunity to rebel. Before Ahaziah could grapple with his rebellious vassal, he met with an accident, which eventually proved fatal to him. He "fell down through the lattice in his upper chamber in Samaria." The hurt he received was incurable by man ; and Ahaziah had not the faith to have recourse to Him with whom nothing is impossible. Instead of this natural course in a king of Jehovah's people, he "sent messengers to inquire of Baal-Zebub,<sup>a</sup> the god of Ekron," whether he should "recover of this disease." The answer to this foolish message came not from Baal-Zebub, but from Jehovah through his prophet Eijah, who was directed by "an angel of Jehovah" to meet the messengers, and send them back to their master with a stern rebuke, and with this very decided response to his question, "Thus saith Jehovah, Thou shalt not come down from that bed, on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die" (2 Kings i. 6 and 16). The messengers did not know Elijah ; but when they described his appearance ("a lord of hair," &c.) to the king, he said, "It is Elijah, the Tishbite." The king's only thought, however, seemed to be to take the prophet and punish him. For this purpose, he sent out "a captain of fifty with his fifty." The captain drew near and addressed the prophet ("And behold he sat on the top of a hill"), and said, "Thou man of God, the king hath said, Come down." To Elijah this seemed another fit occasion for a display of the avenging wrath of God. "If I be a man of God," he said, "then let fire come down from heaven and consume thee and thy fifty." The dreadful doom was instantly fulfilled. The whole band perished. A second band was sent, and met the same fate. A third was then despatched ; but by this time, the display of power at the prophet's disposal had produced its effects.

<sup>a</sup> Baal-zebub, Lord of the Fly. At the Philistine city of Ekron, Baal appears to have been worshipped as a deliverer from the plague of flies. This is a distinct specimen of a "local Baal."

The third captain of fifty fell on his knees before Elijah, "and besought him, and said unto him, O man of God, let my life, and the life of these fifty thy servants, be precious in thy sight." On this Elijah, at the bidding of the angel of Jehovah, went down to the king, and repeated to him the same divine rebuke and stern message of doom. "So he died according to the word of Jehovah." Like his father, Ahaziah had enjoyed the alliance of the good Jehoshaphat; but no benefit accrued to him from it. The two kings "joined to make ships to go to Tarshish;" but the ships were wrecked at Ezion-geber, as had been foretold by the prophet Eliezer, and obviously on account of Jehovah's displeasure with Ahaziah, "who did very wickedly" (2 Chronicles xx. 35).

*Jehoram (or Joram), Ninth King of Israel.*

(B.C. 896—884).

61. HIS POLICY (2 Kings iii.). Ahaziah had no son, and so he was succeeded by his brother Jehoram (*exalted by Jehovah*). Jehoram was, on the whole, and especially in the early part of his reign, the best king of the house of Omri. Like all the other kings indeed, he "cleaved to the sin of Jeroboam;" he "wrought evil in the sight of Jehovah," "but not," it is added, "like his father and like his mother, for he put away the statue of Baal which his father had made." He also, in general, submitted to the guidance of Jehovah through his prophet. That prophet was Elisha, who began his active ministry about the beginning of Jehoram's reign. Elijah's closed with the close of the reign of Ahaziah.

62. TRANSLATION OF ELIJAH (2 Kings ii.). It is not certain if Elijah's translation took place at the beginning of Jehoram's reign, or five years afterwards. There is extant a "writing" or letter described as "from Elijah the prophet" (2 Chron. xxi. 12-15) to Jehoram of Judah, whose reign as sole king did not begin till the fifth year of Jeho-

ram of Israel. There is reason to believe, however, that Jehoram of Judah reigned some years conjointly with Jehoshaphat his father. In any case, it was natural for the historian of the kings to insert as he does at this stage an account of Elijah's translation, because here, as a controlling power, Elijah retires and Elisha takes his place.

The manner of the translation was in keeping with the grand events of Elijah's singular career. The account of it is introduced in the usual abrupt way. Elijah and Elisha were walking together from Gilgal. Elijah wanted to part company with Elisha. He would have him stay behind at place after place ; at Gilgal, at Bethel, at Jericho, because Jehovah had ordered him to proceed to some place further on. But Elisha had a presentiment of what was coming and he would not hear of separation. "As Jehovah liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee." At length, when the two had crossed the Jordan, Elijah dividing the waters with his mantle, the departing prophet spoke out. "Ask what I shall do for thee," said he to Elisha, "before I be taken from thee." "I pray thee," said Elisha, "let a double portion <sup>a</sup> of thy spirit be upon me."

This was a "hard thing" to ask, "the portion of the first born ;" but said Elijah, "If thou see me taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee." So it was, "As they still went on and talked, behold a chariot of fire and horses of fire, and [which] parted them asunder, and Elijah went up by a tempest into the skies." "My father, my father," cried Elisha, "the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof ! and he saw him no more." He never expected to see him

<sup>a</sup> This expression (literally a "mouth of two," or two morsels), has often been taken to mean, *twice as great a portion of the Spirit* as Elijah himself enjoyed. It seems very unlikely that Elisha would have asked, or that Elijah could have granted, such a request. The same phrase occurs in Deut. xxi. 17, where it denotes the amount of a father's goods, which was "the right and token of a first-born son." This was the portion which Elisha, as the adopted successor of Elijah, might reasonably claim. Some make the phrase mean, "two-thirds of the spirit of" Elijah.

more on earth. The sons of the prophet indeed, although they had been forewarned of the translation, seemed to doubt its reality, and insisted upon sending "fifty strong men" to search for the prophet, "lest peradventure the spirit of Jehovah had taken him up and cast him upon some mountain, or into some valley." To satisfy them, Elisha gave a reluctant consent to the search, but he himself knew only too well that on that day his master had been for ever "taken from his head," and that it now fell to him, as his chosen successor, to carry on the great prophetic work.

63. CHARACTER OF ELIJAH. The character of the prophet had always, and particularly in the case of Elijah, much to do with the character of the king and the condition of the people. The prophet was the only real check upon the king, the only true spiritual force in the realm; the only sure witness for God, and truth, and justice. He exercised a commanding sway over both prince and people. In their turn, however, prince and people reacted upon the prophet. They grieved and provoked him with their sinful excesses, and drove him occasionally to extremes of repressive severity, which dimmed the lustre of his example. The prophet, in fact, however pure in spirit, noble in aim, and divinely instructed, was, after all, a child of his age, bounded in his views of most things by its horizon, animated so far by its spirit, and necessarily working with the tools which lay to his hand. Judged by the standard of his own age, Elijah was probably the greatest of all the prophets, certainly the greatest of all the prophets of action. His figure is the most striking, his character the most impressive of all within the range of Old Testament history. His zeal for God, and against idolatry, was admirable in its boldness and single-mindedness. Yet his was by no means a perfect example. His zeal against idolators sometimes led to a severity which appears, from the significant hint given to him at Horeb, to have been in excess of his commission.



No doubt the age was extremely wicked and apostate, and only the most drastic remedies could suffice. Anyhow in this particular Elijah's conduct is no pattern for men of a different age and a higher dispensation. Christian men who would, like him, call down fire from heaven on their opponents, "know not what spirit they are of." It is not indeed for any particular act or acts of faithfulness that the name of this great prophet is revered, but on account of the noble stand which he made for truth and right in an age of rampant apostacy and tyranny. Little is known of his practice in regard to some important questions of the time, particularly that of the proper mode of worshipping Jehovah in public. So far as appears, Elijah stood aloof not only from the corrupt system which was established at Bethel and Dan, but also from the ritual at Jerusalem. He himself offered up sacrifice on an old local altar on Carmel. At Horeb he complained that the children of Israel had "thrown down the altars" of Jehovah. His life, however, was too retired and solitary, his public appearances too fitful and intermittent, and the Scripture notices of his career are too fragmentary, to furnish grounds for certain conclusions as to the forms of worship then prevalent. He is not to be regarded as a regular and systematic teacher of divine truth, or a general censor of morals, but as a "scourge of God," a "faithful and true witness," raised up for a particular purpose.

64. ELISHA BEGINS HIS MINISTRY (2 Kings ii. 12). The first step which Elisha took when he found himself bereft and alone was to make proof of his powers, or ascertain by actual experiment whether the great prophetic gift had indeed descended upon him as well as the mantle. "He took up the mantle of Elijah . . . and went back and smote the waters" of the Jordan, "and said, Where is Jehovah the God of Elijah?" The waters "parted hither and thither, and Elisha went over." His next great work was the healing of the waters of the spring of

Jericho. Many of his other works were of this character, works of mercy or kindness to individuals or communities, but not having much bearing on the history of the nation. Again, some obscurity attaches to certain of his undoubted public services, the order of events not being always clear, and the king's name being seldom given. There can be no doubt, however, regarding his first public service. This occurred during

**65. JEHORAM'S EXPEDITION AGAINST MOAB** (2 Kings iii. 6). At an early period of his reign Jehoram undertook an expedition against king Mesha of Moab, who had rebelled against him.<sup>a</sup> He had as allies Jehoshaphat of Judah and the king of Edom. The three kings resolved to march against Moab "by the way through the wilderness of Edom," which took them round by the south end of the Dead Sea. In the wilderness "there was no water for the host," and famine stared them in the face. To Jehoram there seemed no help; but with the pious Jehoshaphat it was otherwise. "Is there here," said he, "a prophet of Jehovah that we may enquire?" "Here," said one, "is Elisha, the son of Shaphat, who poured water on the hands of Elijah." "The word of Jehovah is with him," said Jehoshaphat.

**66. THE THREE KINGS CONSULT ELISHA** (2 Kings iii. 12). The three kings then went to enquire of Elisha. At first the prophet repelled Jehoram. "Get thee," said he, "to the prophets of thy father, and the prophets of thy mother;" and if it had not been that he "regarded the presence of Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah," he would have given no heed to Jehoram. He asked, however, for a minstrel. He seemed to require the minstrel to bring him into the proper state of exaltation; for

<sup>a</sup> This is believed to be the king Mesha of Moab, whose actions are inscribed on the famous Moabite stone which was recently discovered. But beyond the name and the probable date there is nothing to identify the two monarchs, the warlike events not having a sufficient correspondence.

when the minstrel played "the hand of Jehovah came upon him, and he said, Thus saith Jehovah, make this valley full of ditches. For thus saith Jehovah, Ye shall not see wind, nor shall ye see rain; yet that valley shall be filled with water, that ye may drink." "He (Jehovah) will also deliver the Moabites into your hand." His words speedily came true. "Behold there came water by the way of Edom, and the country was filled with water." To their Moabite foes the unlooked for water, gleaming in the morning sun, seemed blood, and they rushed to the conclusion that the allies had fallen upon each other, and that the kings were slain. "Now, therefore," said they, "Moab to the spoil!" Thus they rushed on destruction. The Israelites smote the Moabites, and laid waste their whole country. Only the great Moabite stronghold Kir-haraseth<sup>a</sup> withstood them, and even it was greatly harassed. "The slingers went about it, and smote it." The king of Moab however, Mesha, was a man of energy and resource. He first attempted to cut his way through to the king of Moab with 700 picked men. Foiled in this attempt, "he took his eldest son, who should have reigned in his stead, and offered him for a burnt offering on the wall." Doubtless the king knew that this act would produce a profound impression on the opposing army. Such a human sacrifice, to what divinity soever it might be offered,<sup>b</sup> could

<sup>a</sup> Kir-haraseth, supposed to be the same as Kir of Moab (Isaiah xv. 1), which has been satisfactorily identified with the modern *Kerak*, which lies about ten miles south-east of the Dead Sea. Its situation is remarkable. It is built upon the top of a steep hill, surrounded on all sides by a steep and narrow valley, which again is completely enclosed by mountains rising higher than the town, and overlooking it on all sides. It must have been from these surrounding heights that the Israelite slingers hurled their volleys of stones, after the capture of the place had proved impossible (2 Kings iii. 25).

<sup>b</sup> Human sacrifice was one of the cruel rites of idolatry that had a strange fascination for Israel, both north and south. There are several distinct proofs, both in the history and in the prophecies, that at their worst periods of corruption the Israelites actually "burnt their sons and daughters in the fire;" "slew," "devoured," "sacrificed" them to the flame-god Molech; see Deut. xii. 31; 2 Chron. xxviii. 3;

not but fill the men of Israel and Judah, as well as those of Edom, with awe and apprehension. The effect was an immediate and total abandonment of the enterprise. Moab remained unsubdued, though its territory had been most barbarously wasted, trees cut down, wells stopped, etc.

67. JEHORAM ASKED TO CURE NAAMAN'S LEPROSY (2 Kings v.). The events of Jehoram's reign are seldom recorded in full, except in connection with some great prophetic act of Elisha. At this time Jehoram was greatly startled by the receipt of a letter from the king of Syria. It was brought, along with rich presents, by Naaman, captain of the Syrian host, and the purport of it was a request that the king of Israel would heal Naaman of his leprosy. When he read the letter, Jehoram "rent his clothes, and said, Am I God, to kill and make alive, that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy? Wherefore consider," he added, "and see how he seeketh a quarrel against me." It was not, of course, the king himself, but Elisha for whom the application was really meant. Elisha's fame had been carried to Damascus by a little captive Israelitish maid, "who waited on Naaman's wife." When Elisha heard of the king's causeless agitation on the subject he "sent unto him, saying, Why hast thou rent thy clothes? Let him come unto me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel." Naaman went to Elisha in state, "with his horses and his chariots," and after a little needful prophetic schooling he was not only cured of his leprosy, but also converted from idolatry. "Now know I that there is no God in all the earth but in Israel" (2 Kings v. 15).

68. JEHORAM'S FIRST WAR WITH THE SYRIANS (2 Kings vi. 8). The kings of Israel at this period were seldom long without a war with the Syrians. Some time after the affair of Naaman it is

Jeremiah vii. 31; Ezek. xvi. 20, 21; xxiii. 37, etc. Causing their sons and daughters "to pass through the fire" was most probably a euphemism for burning them rather than, as has sometimes been maintained, merely a "purificatory rite."

said "the king of Syria warred against Israel." No regular account is given of the war; in fact, it is only mentioned incidentally in connection with certain of Elisha's great services to the nation. Elisha warned the king of Israel of the projected attacks of the king of Syria, so that the latter, acting on his advice, thereby "saved himself not once nor twice." The king of Syria was "sore troubled for this thing," and suspected treachery in some of his own servants. But one of these told him the startling truth: "Elisha the prophet that is in Israel telleth the king of Israel the words that thou speakest in thy bed-chamber."

69. THE KING OF SYRIA ENDEAVOURS TO SEIZE ELISHA (2 Kings vi. 13). Having found out who was his real opponent, and being told that he was in Dothan,<sup>a</sup> the king of Syria sent "a great host" to apprehend him. They surrounded the city by night. Elisha's servant, rising early, was greatly alarmed. "Fear not," said Elisha, "for they that are with us are more than they that are with them." Elisha then prayed Jehovah to open the eyes of the youth. Whereupon "he saw and behold the mountain (was) full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha." The prophet then prayed that the attacking force might be smitten with blindness. And when this was done he led them into Samaria. Then he prayed that their eyes might be opened. They saw and beheld themselves in the power of their enemies. But Elisha was merciful. "My father," said the king of Israel, "shall I smite? shall I smite?" "Thou shalt not smite," said Elisha. "Wouldst thou smite those whom thou hast taken captive with thy sword and thy bow? Set bread and water before them, that they may eat and drink, and go to their master." To Elisha was thus due the bloodless relief of his country from a great and pressing danger.

<sup>a</sup> Dothan or Dothain is said still to bear its ancient name, and to be situated where Eusebius described it as being, viz., about twelve miles north of Samaria. Its ruins are said to occupy a "huge" mound or *Tell* at a short distance from the plain of Esdraclon, "four or five miles south-west of *Jenin*."

And this was not all. His action put a stop, for a time at least, to the inroads of the Syrians. "The bands of Syria came no more into the land of Israel,"

#### QUESTIONS AND POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

1. *Ahab's defensive wars against Syria had a very different issue from his offensive one. What was the cause of this difference?*

2. *In what important respect did the policy of Joram differ from that of Ahab and Jezebel?*

3. *Explain the meaning of the manifestation to Elijah at Horeb.*

4. *What do you understand by Elisha's request for "a double portion" of the spirit of Elijah?*

5. *What is known about Mesha?*

6. *How does Elisha's advice to the king of Israel regarding the treatment of the Syrian prisoners illustrate the prophet's character and mission?*

---

#### CHAPTER V.

JEHORAM (CONTINUED), JEHU, JEHOAHAZ, AND JEHOASH OR JOASH.

70. JEHORAM'S SECOND SYRIAN WAR (2 Kings vi. 24).—At this period war seldom ceased between Syria and Israel, except for a very short time. How long the interval was between Jehoram's first and second Syrian wars is not said, but the second war was much more threatening than the first. Benhadad "gathered together all his host, and went up and besieged Samaria." The capital was so long and so closely invested, that it was reduced to the utmost extremity of famine. Provisions were so scarce, that "an ass's head was sold for fourscore pieces of silver." The responsibility for this state of things was thrown chiefly on Elisha, who in this as in the last war appears to have been the king's chief counsellor. As the king "was passing by upon the wall there cried a woman unto the king, saying, Help my lord, O king! And he said, If Jehovah

do not help thee, whence shall I help thee? out of the barn floor, or out of the wine press?" The king inquired "What ailed her!" Then the woman told him a horrible tale of famine. She and another woman had agreed to eat their two children, one after the other. The complainant's child had been eaten, but the other woman now refused to give up her child. When the king heard this he "rent his clothes." "God do so and more also to me," he said, "if the head of Elisha the son of Shaphat stand on him this day." He then despatched a messenger to slay Elisha. But the prophet, who knew "the words" that the King of Syria spoke "in his bed-chamber," was not likely to be ignorant of the orders given by the King of Israel. He asked the elders, who were with him in his house at the time, to shut the door and keep the messenger out. "Is not," he added, "the sound of his master's feet behind him?" So it was. The king followed quickly on the heels of his messenger.<sup>a</sup>

71. ELISHA PREDICTS IMMEDIATE ABUNDANCE IN SAMARIA (2 Kings vii. 1).—When the king came, Elisha speedily reassured and pacified him. The spirit of prophecy came upon him, and he announced such a coming change in the condition of affairs as at once dispelled all anxiety. "Hear ye the word of Jehovah. To-morrow about this time a measure of fine flour (shall be sold) for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel in the gate of Samaria." This seemed too good news to be true. "Behold," said a lord who was with the King, "if Jehovah would make windows in heaven, might this thing be." "Behold," retorted Elisha, "thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat of it." Both predictions came true within twenty-four hours. The Syrians, through the interposition of Jehovah, were

<sup>a</sup> Apparently the messenger had come down before, and it is probably the down-coming of the *king* that is intimated in verse 33, the words for king and messenger being very similar. Anyhow the king did "come down," for he is immediately found listening to the prophet, "leaning on the hand of a lord."

seized with a sudden panic and fled in the twilight, leaving behind them their camp and all their baggage. Their flight was discovered by accident. "Four leprous men," driven to desperation by famine, resolved to "fall into the host of the Syrians" as the only course that offered a chance of life. They found an empty camp; and after eating and drinking, and loading themselves with rich spoils, they communicated the good news to their friends in the camp of Israel. At first the king suspected a stratagem on the part of the Syrians; but all fears on this head were soon dispelled. Scouts were sent out who reported that the way to the Jordan was "full of garments and vessels which the Syrians had cast away in their haste." Thus was Samaria suddenly relieved, and famine instantaneously turned into plenty. The abandoned provisions of the fugitive Syrians were to be had at a trifling cost. The incredulous "lord," however, reaped no benefit from the happy change. "The king appointed" him "to have charge of the gate, and the people, rushing tumultuously out to share the spoils, "trode upon him in the gate, and he died" (verse 20).

72. JEHORAM'S THIRD (AND OFFENSIVE) SYRIAN WAR (2 Kings viii. 28, &c.; 2 Chron. xxii. 5).—Thus, like his father Ahab, Jehoram had been signally successful in his defensive wars against Syria. The cause of success was without doubt in both cases the same. The king was so hard pressed that for the time he willingly submitted to the guidance of God's prophet. In their offensive wars both father and son apparently acted in defiance of all prophetic warning. Ahab went up and fell at Ramoth Gilead in face of the distinct and solemn warning of Micaiah. Jehoram took a like step, without, so far as appears, even asking the advice of the great Elisha. He was successful at first. He took and "kept Ramoth Gilead, he and all Israel, because of Hazael, king of Syria" (2 Kings ix. 14). The success was fleeting and delusive. Ramoth Gilead was as fatal to Joram



as to Ahab. Joram received a wound there which compelled him to retire for a time to Jezreel to be healed. His retirement left the army open to influences which quickly sealed his fate.

73. ELISHA SUPERSEDES JORAM (2 Kings ix. 1).—There are good reasons for believing that Joram had ceased to adhere to the wise policy of his early reign, and no longer took counsel of Elisha, or repressed the idolatries of his mother Jezebel.

1. Elisha at this time leaves the land of Israel, and retires for a time to Damascus.

2. At the close of Joram's reign the Baalite idolatry is again found very prevalent in Israel (2 Kings x. 21-28). There was apparently only too good reason to believe that the only way to root idolatry out of Israel was to put a summary end to the rule of the house of Ahab. The time was in fact come for Elisha to complete the great corrective work which had been begun by Elijah.

At Horeb (1 Kings xix. 15-18) Elijah received a triple charge, only one part of which, the "anointing" of Elisha as his successor, was accomplished by him. There remained the anointing of Jehu to be king of Israel, and of Hazael "to be king over Syria."

74. ELISHA MAKES KNOWN TO HAZAEL HIS COMING ELEVATION (2 Kings viii. 7).—It is nowhere said that Elisha "anointed" Hazael; and probably it was never meant that a prophet of Jehovah should take part in the actual consecration of a Gentile king. All that was intended may have been that the prophet should exert his influence to bring about in due time the appointment of Hazael to the throne of Damascus. And it is manifest that he had much to do with that important event. The narrative is somewhat obscure in parts, but the general drift is not doubtful. When Elisha came to Damascus, "Benhadad the king was sick, and he sent Hazael with a present to the prophet, to enquire of Jehovah by him, saying, Shall I recover of this disease?" Elisha's answer, as it stands, seems con-

tradictory ; but no doubt it was plain enough to Hazael. The purport of it probably was, that though Benhadad might recover of his disease, yet he would not have an opportunity of doing so, as he would soon “surely die” by violence. The latter part of the message was doubtless meant only for the ear of Hazael, and was never conveyed to the king. After delivering the message, Elisha looked Hazael fixedly in the face “till he was ashamed,” and then “the man of God wept.” “Why weepeth my lord?” said Hazael. Elisha replied that it was because he knew the evil that would be done by Hazael to the children of Israel. To do it required a great and powerful warrior. “But what,” said Hazael, “is thy servant this dog (or dog that he is) to do this great thing?”<sup>a</sup> “Jehovah hath showed me,” said Elisha, “that thou shalt be king over Syria.” This prophecy doubtless tended to fulfil itself—anyhow, it was fulfilled immediately. Next day some one, whether Hazael or not, does not appear, smothered Benhadad apparently while in his bath, “and Hazael reigned in his stead.”

75. JEHU ANOINTED AND PROCLAIMED (10TH) KING OF ISRAEL (B.C. 884—856, 2 Kings ix.). Elisha now took the decisive step towards religious reform in Israel. King Joram had returned to Jezreel to be healed of his wounds. His army remained at Ramoth Gilead, apparently under the command of Jehu, the grandson of Nimshi. Elisha “called one of the children of the prophets, and said unto him, Gird up thy loins, and take this flask of oil in thine hand, and go to Ramoth Gilead.” There he was to “look out Jehu—make him arise up from among his brethren, and carry him to a chamber within a chamber—then take the flask of oil and

<sup>a</sup> 2 Kings viii. 13. The rendering of this passage in the Authorised Version, “Is thy servant a dog that he should do this great thing?” conveys a meaning which is much more creditable to Hazael’s heart than the original warrants. It is not horror of the bloody deeds which the prophet foretells he will do, when king of Syria, that Hazael expresses, but merely his doubt whether such a mean and humble individual, such a “dog” as himself, was equal to the accomplishment of such great deeds!

pour it on his head, and say, thus saith Jehovah, I have anointed thee king over Israel." Then he was to flee.

The young prophet, who is supposed to have been the widow's son of Sarepta, fulfilled his commission to the letter, concluding by charging Jehu with the task of "smiting the house of Ahab." The whole of it was to perish. It was to be made like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah—not a single male was to be left alive in it; and the dogs should "eat Jezebel in the portion of Jezreel." Having thus spoken, the prophet "opened the door and fled." His brother officers no sooner learnt what the prophet's mission was, than they hastened to proclaim Jehu king. They "blew trumpets, saying, Jehu reigneth." Having the army with him, Jehu had little difficulty in carrying everything before him. His zeal was fierce and relentless. He rode on the top of his commission, acting as if to smite the house of Ahab meant to put to death, by fair means or foul, every member of the race of Ahab, whether distant or near, eminent or obscure, on whom he could lay hands.

76. JEHU SLAYS THE KINGS OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH (2 Kings ix. 15). Jehoram was still at Jezreel for the healing of his wounds, and his cousin, Ahaziah king of Judah, had "come down to see him." Nothing was known at Jezreel of the conspiracy; and Jehu took care that no one should escape from the camp to make it known. He himself drove in a chariot to Jezreel. The "watchman on the tower in Jezreel" spied the cloud of dust<sup>a</sup> approaching; Joram sent out a horseman to ask, "Is it peace?" "What hast thou to do with peace?" said Jehu, "Turn thee behind me."

The watchman reported, "the messenger came to them, but he cometh not again." A second messenger was sent out, but with the same result. Jehu had now, however, come near enough to be recognisable by his

<sup>a</sup> *Septuagint*—or "multitude," or "company" as in the A. V. of the Bible, "the company" raising a cloud of dust proportionate to its size and its "furiousness" of driving.

driving. "The driving," said the watchman, "is like the driving of Jehu the son of Nimshi, for he driveth furiously."<sup>a</sup> On this Jehoram and Ahaziah rode out to meet Jehu, "each in his chariot," they met him in the portion of Naboth the Jezreelite. "Is it peace?" said Joram. "What peace," said Jehu, "so long as the whoredoms of thy mother Jezebel, and her witchcrafts are so many?" It was clearly war, not peace. Joram therefore "turned his hands and fled," crying "Treachery, O Ahaziah!" But flight was hopeless. "Jehu drew a bow with his full strength, and smote Jehoram between his arms, and the arrow went out at his heart, and he sank down in his chariot." "Take him up," said Jehu to Bidkar, his captain, "and cast him in the portion of the field of Naboth the Jezreelite; for remember," he added, "when I and thou rode together after Ahab<sup>b</sup> his father, how the Lord laid this burden upon him." Seeing the fate of his cousin, Ahaziah fled by the way of Beth-gan,<sup>c</sup> or the garden house—and Jehu followed. They smote him "in the going up to Gur, which is by Ibleam, but did not kill him. He fled to Megiddo and died there"<sup>d</sup> (2 Kings ix. 27).

77. JEHU PUTS JEZEBEL TO DEATH (2 Kings ix. 30). The next victim was Jezebel, who met her fate with characteristic resolution. She "painted her face and tired her head, and looked out at a window, and as Jehu entered in at the gate," she saluted him as a second "Zimri, slayer of his lord."<sup>e</sup> "Jehu lifted up his face to the window and said, who is on my side, who? And there looked out to him two or three

<sup>a</sup> Or "in madness." (See 2 Kings ix. 11) where the same word is rendered *mad*.

<sup>b</sup> This happened when Ahab went down to take possession of Naboth's vineyard, and was met and denounced by Elijah.

<sup>c</sup> Beth-gan was probably the same as En-gannim, the fountain of the gardens.

<sup>d</sup> The account of Ahaziah's death which is given in Chronicles (2 Chron. xxii. 9) bears that "he was hid in Samaria," but caught and brought to Jehu and then and there slain and buried.

<sup>e</sup> Jezebel's words are open to two or three constructions. "Hail, Zimri," or "Is it peace, Zimri, slayer of his lord?" or "Had Zimri peace." The taunt, which is the point, is the same in all.

eunuchs, and he said, throw her down; and they threw her down, and some of her blood was sprinkled on the wall, and some on the horses, and he trode her under foot." Jehu then went in and ate and drank. After which his heart softened somewhat towards his queenly victim. "Go," he said, "see now this cursed (woman), and bury her, for she is a king's daughter." Already there was nothing to be found but the merest fragments of the haughty Jezebel—"her skull and feet, and the palms of her hands." "This," said Jehu, "is the word of Jehovah by his servant Elijah—in the portion of Jezreel, shall dogs eat the flesh of Jezebel."

78. SLAYS MORE ROYAL PERSONAGES (2 Kings x.). It might have been thought that Jehu had now sufficiently done his work of extermination. But he would not stay his hand while a single member of the house of Ahab lived. "Ahab had seventy sons" or descendants at Samaria. Jehu resolved to have them put to death, but to throw the responsibility of their execution on others. He therefore wrote letters to the leading men, and those that had brought up Ahab's children," challenging them to "stand up for their master's house." They had their master's sons, chariots too, and horses, a fenced city, and armour. They should, therefore, "look out the best and meetest of their master's sons," make a king of him, and fight for him. This was, they well knew, a mere mockery of their weakness. "Behold," said they, "two kings stood not before him, how then shall we stand?" In terror they sent to Jehu professing to be his servants, and ready to do what he wished. This was what Jehu wanted. "Take ye the heads of the men your master's sons," wrote Jehu, "and come to me to Jezreel by to-morrow this time." The seventy heads were sent to Jezreel. "Lay ye them," said Jehu, "in two heaps at the entering in of the gate until the morning." In the morning Jehu went out and affected to be astonished at the sight. Most faithfully, however, did he point the moral.

“ Know ye that there shall fall to the earth nothing of the word of Jehovah, which Jehovah spake concerning the house of Ahab, by his servant Elijah ” (2 Kings x. 10).

2. The least defensible of all Jehu's massacres was the slaughter of the brethren or relatives of the king of Judah. He met them at Beth-eked, or “ the shearing house,”<sup>a</sup> “ going down,” as they said, “ to salute the children of the king and of the queen ” of Israel. “ Take them alive,” said Jehu, “ and they took them alive and slew them at the pit of the shearing house, two and forty men ; neither left he any of them.”

79. JEHU MASSACRES THE WORSHIPPERS OF BAAL (2 Kings x. 15). At this stage of his proceedings, Jehu met a kindred spirit, Jehonadab the son of Rechab,<sup>b</sup> and taking him into his chariot said, “ Come with me and see my zeal for Jehovah. The proof of his zeal was the craftily-planned massacre of the whole of the worshippers of Baal in Israel. Jehu pretended to have “ a great sacrifice to do to Baal.” “ Ahab served Baal a little ; but Jehu shall serve him much.” All the worshippers of Baal were therefore assembled. “ There was not a man left, that came not.” “ The house of Baal was filled from the one end to the other.” Jehu then made sure that there were amongst the assembled Baalites none of the servants of Jehovah. He then appointed eighty men as executioners, who were to answer with their lives if any of the Baal worshippers escaped. All being ready, Jehu offered up the burnt-offering to Baal. Then he gave his orders, “ Go in and slay them, let none come forth.” None came forth. “ They smote them with the edge of the sword.”

The guard then completed the work of destruction

<sup>a</sup> This place was situated between Jezreel and Samaria.

<sup>b</sup> Rechab, the rider or horseman, was probably at first a mere epithet, descriptive of the *Bedouin* life led by the ancestor of the Rechabites (Jer. xxxv. 6-19). Jehonadab, the son or descendant of Rechab, imposed upon his descendants a partly *Bedouin* and partly monastic rule of life.

by burning the wooden images, and breaking down the stone statue or image of Baal, and turning the "house of Baal" into "a draught house," or a receptacle for everything that was vile and refuse. "Thus Jehu destroyed Baal out of Israel." The history of these massacres is the history of Jehu. He did nothing else. Once seated on the throne, his energy and force of character seemed to evaporate. No great or kingly action is recorded of him; and instead of extending the nation's boundaries, he lost to it all the territories to the east of the Jordan. Hazael "smote" the Israelites "in all their coasts," "from Jordan eastwards." Jehu reigned twenty-eight years, and the events of the last twenty-seven are compressed into eight verses. Nothing is said of his having ever consulted the great prophet Elisha, who placed him on the throne.

**80. CHARACTER OF JEHU.** The character of Jehu is legible in every line of the narrative of his proceedings in clearing his way to the throne. He was a merciless and unscrupulous zealot, acting as if the end could justify the means, and the cause of the holy God could be served by cruelty and treachery. Thus his service of God was at best but a half-hearted service. He "took no heed to walk in the law of Jehovah the God of Israel with all his heart." He was rewarded for his service to the nation in extirpating the Baalite worship with a fitting worldly reward, viz., the crown of Israel to his family for four generations. But, while his service was approved, the manner of performing it—the excessive bloodshed with which it was accompanied—was blamed. "I will avenge," said Jehovah by Hosea, "the blood of Jezreel on the house of Jehu."<sup>a</sup>

**81. JEHU THE FIRST KING OF ISRAEL NOTICED IN THE ASSYRIAN RECORDS.** Jehu's name is found on the famous black obelisk discovered by Mr Layard at Nimroud, on which Shalmaneser II. inscribed the record of his Syrian vic-

<sup>a</sup> Hosea i. 4.

tories. After giving an account of his defeat of Hazael of Syria, Jehu's contemporary, he mentions the tribute of Jehu. "Tribute of Jehu, son of Omri, silver, gold, bowls of gold, cups of gold, bottles of gold, vessels of gold, maces, royal utensils, rods of wood, I received of him." The date of this inscription is about 840 B.C., while Jehu's reign, according to the biblical chronology, only came down to 856 B.C. ; a difficulty which further research will probably clear up. There seems little doubt that Jehu, King of Israel, is here meant. Till a late period, Samaria—built by Omri—always appears in the Assyrian inscriptions as the house of Omri ; and Jehu, as a successor of Omri, is naturally called the son of Omri. It is also most probable that Shalmaneser, when so near Jehu's dominions, as he was when attacking Hazael, would have some communication with Jehu. Jehu would readily make him a present, or pay him tribute, to avert his hostility. Nay, it is not improbable, that it was in compliance with Jehu's request that Shalmaneser attacked Hazael, Jehu's great enemy.

*Jehoahaz, Eleventh King of Israel (B.C. 856—841).*

82. REIGNS FEEBLY FOR SEVENTEEN YEARS (2 Kings xiii. 1). Jehu was succeeded by his son Jehoahaz, under whom the bad condition of the nation became worse. There had indeed been no thorough religious reform under Jehu. "They departed not from the sin of Jeroboam. And there stood also the Asherah in Samaria" (2 Kings xiii. 6). Baal had been rooted out, but the worship of Ash-toreth was still practised. There was no intelligent and steadfast cleaving to the one true God.

Jehovah's "anger," therefore, "was kindled against Israel, and he delivered them into the hands of Hazael, King of Syria, and . . . of Ben-Hadad, his son, all (their) days."

Jehoahaz was, in fact, a sort of vassal of the Syrian King, who permitted him only to maintain a limited force, viz., "fifty horsemen, and ten chariots, and ten



thousand footmen." In his humiliation Jehoahaz turned to God, and the Lord "gave Israel a Saviour," or deliverer. Who the deliverer was, or whether there was more than one deliverer, is matter of doubt. The common view is that the "Saviour" was Jehoahaz's grandson, Jeroboam II., the conqueror of Syria. Relief came sooner, however, from Jehoahaz's own son Joash, who first turned the tide of Syrian victory. But the most natural view, if it can be established, is that which makes the deliverer and the deliverance contemporary with Jehoahaz himself, and also external to the nation of Israel. In this case the "Saviour" was Shalmaneser, King of Assyria, who, by "his campaigns against Benhadad, broke the power of that monarch for a time, and so gave a breathing time to the Israelites."<sup>a</sup>

Jehoahaz had a peaceful end. He "slept with his fathers, and they buried him in Samaria."

*Jehoash or Joash, Twelfth King of Israel* (B.C. 841—825).

83. A MORE SUCCESSFUL AND CREDITABLE RULER (2 Kings xiii. 10). Joash succeeded his father, Jehoahaz, and reigned sixteen years. Under him the tide of Syrian conquest was turned. Joash did what it seems strange that neither his father nor grandfather ever did—he consulted the great prophet Elisha, who still survived. He went down to see the prophet when the latter "was fallen sick of the sickness, whereof he died," and "wept over his face, and said, O my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof!" Elisha administered counsel and comfort, clinching his words with expressive action. "Take bow and arrows." "Put thine hand upon the bow," said Elisha. The king put his hand upon the bow, and "Elisha put his hands upon the king's hands." The prophet then made the king open the window and shoot.

He shot. "The arrow of the Lord's deliverance, and the arrow of deliverance from Syria," cried the

<sup>a</sup> Smith—Ass. Epon. Canon, p. 192.

prophet, "for thou shalt smite the Syrians in Aphek, till thou hast consumed them." Not once or even twice only should he do this. "Take the arrows," said Elisha to the king, "and smite upon the ground." The king "smote thrice, and then stayed; and the man of God was wroth with him, and said thou shouldest have smitten five or six times, then hadst thou smitten Syria, till thou hadst consumed it; whereas now thou shalt smite Syria but thrice." The dying prophet's words came true. Joash smote Ben-Hadad thrice, and retook the cities of Israel, west of the Jordan (2 Kings xiii. 25).

84. JOASH REPELS THE INVASION OF AMAZIAH (2 Kings xiv. 8). Amaziah, King of Judah, had smitten Edom. Elated by this, he hoped to conquer Joash, and bring Israel again under the house of David. He sent a challenge to Joash. Joash answered him with a contemptuous parable. "The thistle that (was) in Lebanon sent to the cedar that (was) in Lebanon, saying, Give thy daughter to my son to wife; and there passed by a wild beast that was in Lebanon, and trode down the thistle." "Tarry at home," added Joash, "for why shouldest thou meddle to thy hurt." Amaziah persisted. Joash, therefore, went up; and he and Amaziah looked one another in the face at Beth-Shemesh, and Judah was put to the worse before Israel, and they fled every man to their tents. Joash took Amaziah prisoner, and captured Jerusalem. He "brake down the wall of Jerusalem from the gate of Ephraim to the corner gate four hundred cubits." He also carried off to Samaria, the treasures of God's house and "the king's house and hostages." Thus Joash was successful against his enemies on all sides. He died in peace, and was "buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel."

85. CHARACTER OF ELISHA. Though the divinely chosen successor of Elijah, Elisha, nevertheless, differed widely in character from that illustrious prophet. Each of them was great, though in a different

style from the other. Each was in his period the great commanding power and influence amongst the northern people—the stay and staff of the nation—“the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof.” Each could set the seal of God—the witness of a miracle—to his acts and utterances. Each could thus carry all before him, and determine, at will, the national policy! Yet neither of these all-influential men of God was ever found to intervene in national affairs, save at a critical juncture.

Like Elijah also, Elisha seems to have been almost wholly absorbed in the one great task of suppressing the Baalite idolatry. He does not appeal to the Levitical law. He does not even protest against the calf worship. The two eminent prophets are indeed at one in zeal for their mission; but they differ widely in their manner and bearing. Their dispositions and habits were wholly different. Elisha was mild, gentle, tolerant, and also social. He lived not in dens and caves of the earth, but in a house and in the city, mixing with his fellow-men. He could thus advise and persuade, as well as threaten and terrify; and hence, on the whole, he was more successful than Elijah in his enterprises. The two prophets have been not unjustly held to present much the same contrast in character as the blessed Saviour and his forerunner, John Baptist. The resemblance is very decided in the case of the miracles of Elisha, which, with two exceptions, the cursing of the children at Bethel, and the smiting of Gehazi with leprosy, bear the mark of beneficence. They are works of mercy and loving kindness to men.

#### QUESTIONS AND POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

1. *What grounds are there for believing that previous to his unfortunate expedition to Ramoth-gilead, Joram had ceased to be guided by Elisha?*

2. *To what period of his reign, and to what species of action, is the record of Jehu's history confined?*

3. *To what extent does scripture express approval of Jehu's policy?*

4. *Is there any passage in the prophecies referring to his excess of cruelty?*

5. *By what act did Joash, at the beginning of his reign, show his superiority as a ruler to his father Jehoahaz and his grandfather Jehu?*

6. *Compare the characters and careers of Elijah and Elisha.*

## CHAPTER VI.

REIGN OF JEROBOAM II., ZACHARIAH, SHALLUM, MENAHEM, PEKAHIAH, PEKAH, AND HOSHEA.

*Jeroboam II., Thirteenth King, (B.C. 825—784 or 773).<sup>a</sup>*

86. HIS CAREER GREAT IN A WORLDLY SENSE. (2 Kings xiv. 23). Jeroboam II., the son and successor of Joash, was happily named, for he turned out to be indeed a second founder of the kingdom, and more truly an "increaser of the people" than the first Jeroboam. It was probably on account of some prophetic forecast of his career that the name was given him. Anyhow he deserved it. He "restored the coasts of Israel from the entering of Hamath"<sup>b</sup> (the extreme northern limit of the united kingdom in the days of David and Solomon) "to the sea of the plain." He also "recovered Damascus." This however, probably did not mean more than the making of it tributary to Israel.

In some sense, on his own side of Palestine, Jeroboam II. restored all the old "coasts" or boundaries of Israel. And these great results he appears to have accomplished within the first ten years of a reign, which extended to forty-one, if not to fifty-two or

<sup>a</sup> See Note to Chronological Table.

<sup>b</sup> The entering in of Hamath was "the lower part of the Cœle-Syrian Valley, from the gorge of the Litány to Baalbek."

fifty-three years.<sup>a</sup> The sacred historian nevertheless confines his account of the reign of the greatest of the kings to a mere statement of his achievements. The reason comes clearly out in the pages of the contemporary prophets Hosea and Amos. Jeroboam's greatness was entirely of a material kind. He brought the nation military glory and temporal prosperity; but he did nothing to promote its moral or spiritual advancement. On this head nothing good is said of him by either prophet or historian, while not a little that is evil is implied. Under him the nation declined morally and religiously. The long period of peace and prosperity was devoted chiefly to luxury and self-indulgence, which speedily sapped the foundations of religion and morality. Thus this brilliant reign was merely an expiring flicker. The glory was not really returning to Israel, but on the point of departing from it for ever. The prophets were already foretelling ruin and captivity.<sup>b</sup>

**87. CHANGE IN THE CONDITION OF THE NATION AND IN THE DIVINE TREATMENT OF IT.** In this long and prosperous reign it may be said that Israel had its last chance of reform. It received a full trial, and was found wanting. It was now manifest that the nation could not be corrected either by prosperity or by the stern discipline of prophets moving in their midst, armed with the terrors of divine wrath, and able to call down fire from heaven. For the future they were to be tried by adversity, and under the guidance of prophets of a different class—spiritual prophets—men who wielded no weapons save those of spiritual admonition and moral suasion. This was a necessary step, in the nation's progress, to a higher and yet more spiritual dispensation.

*Zachariah, Fourteenth King (B.C. 773—772).*

**88. IS SLAIN AFTER A REIGN OF SIX MONTHS** (2 Kings xv. 8). Zachariah, the son of Jeroboam II.,

<sup>a</sup> See Note to Chronological Table.

<sup>b</sup> See Amos vi. 14; vii. 17; ix. 8-10.

was the fourth in descent from Jehu. He was thus the last member of the family who had a promise of the throne ; and he proved the last of the dynasty. He only reigned six months, meeting the usual fate of the weak successor of a strong ruler. One of his captains, "Shallum, the son of Jabesh, conspired against him and slew him, and reigned in his stead." From an obscurity in the Hebrew text doubts have been entertained as to whether Shallum had not an accomplice in his conspiracy, or a rival claimant to the throne named Kobolam. The evidence, however, seems altogether insufficient to prove even the existence of such a person.

*Shallum, Fifteenth King* (B.C. 772).

89. REIGNS ONE MONTH (2 Kings xv. 13). Shallum set an example of usurpation and assassination which became the rule of succession, through the turbulent half century of existence which still remained to the nation. He himself speedily succumbed. He had only "reigned a month of days in Samaria" when "Menahem, the son of Gadi, smote him, and slew him, and reigned in his stead."

*Menahem, Sixteenth King* (B.C. 772—761).

90. THE FIRST REGULAR TRIBUTARY OF ASSYRIA (2 Kings xv. 14). Menahem was, it seems, stationed at Tirzah, when he heard of Shallum's conspiracy, and he immediately went up to Samaria with the troops which were under his command, in order to avenge the death of his master. Apparently, while he was on his way from Tirzah to Samaria, he encountered some opposition, which greatly incensed him. "Tiphseh,<sup>a</sup> and the coasts (or borders) thereof from Tirzah opened not unto him." "Therefore he smote it" with a savage ven-

<sup>a</sup>It is impossible to say where the Tiphseh here referred to lay. From the context it would seem to have been in the neighbourhood of Tirzah. But the only Tiphseh mentioned in Scripture (1 Kings iv. 24) is believed to be the classical Thapsacum, which lay in Northern Syria, at the "ford of the Euphrates."

geance, not even sparing the defenceless women, but subjecting them to the most revoltingly barbarous treatment. This act of savage cruelty at home, and one of discreet submission to a powerful foreign foe, are the only two events in Menahem's career which have been deemed worthy of record. It was in his reign that the first invasion of the country by the great rising empire on the Tigris took place. "Pul <sup>a</sup> the King of Assyria came up against the land." This was the beginning of the end—the prelude to the complete conquest foretold by the prophets. Menahem escaped by paying a tribute of a thousand talents of silver, "exacted" "of all the mighty men of wealth—of each man fifty shekels of silver." The condition of this tribute was that Pul's "hand might be with" Menahem, "to confirm the kingdom on his hand." From this condition it may be inferred that Menahem continued to pay tribute to Pul and his successors on the throne of Assyria. That he actually did so is proved by the annals of Tiglath-pileser, who is believed to have been Pul's successor. In those contemporary records recently dug up, mention is made by this monarch of his having received tribute from among others—"Rezon of Syria, Menahem of Samaria, Hirom of Tyre," &c. This is one of the most interesting corroborations of Scripture history.

Menahem had the rare fortune in these latter years of the monarchy to die in peace and to be succeeded by his own son.

*Pekahiah, Seventeenth King (B.C. 761—759).*

91. HIS BRIEF, INGLORIOUS REIGN (2 Kings xv. 23). Pekahiah reigned scarcely two years; and nothing more is recorded of him than that in the

<sup>a</sup> The name of Pul has not yet been identified on any of the Assyrian monuments. This fact is considered "the most remarkable circumstance in the whole matter," and "the more curious, as despatches have been found written by an officer who bore that name." Smith's *Ass. Disc.*, p. 448—"There can be no question," adds Mr Smith "that further researches will settle many of the questions (in biblical history) still in doubt."

matter of his duty to God he followed the usual evil course of the kings, and met the common kingly fate. "He did evil in the sight of Jehovah, and departed not from the sins of Jeroboam." Such a man had no chance of permanent rule in those troubled times. So "Pekah the son of Remaliah, a captain of his, conspired against him, and smote him in Samaria, in the palace of the king's house . . . and killed him, and reigned in his room."

*Pekah, Eighteenth King (B.C. 759—739 or 730).<sup>a</sup>*

92. HIS ENERGETIC BUT FATAL POLICY. Pekah was assisted in the assassination of his predecessor by a band of fifty Gileadites. It has been inferred from this circumstance that he himself was a native of Gilead; and his character was certainly of the Gileadite type, as exemplified in such eminent Gileadites as Jephthah and Elijah. He had abundant capacity to control the turbulent factions that now rent and distracted the diminished little realm. But the chief danger to Israel at this time lay without rather than within. The mighty empire of Assyria was pushing irresistably westwards. The only chance for the little Semitic kingdoms west of the Euphrates lay in union and mutual help. The fact should by this time have been patent to them all, particularly to Israel and Judah. To them the folly of quarrelling and fighting with each other, in presence of this redoubted foe of both, ought to have been particularly obvious. They had had ample proof that it was not the will of Jehovah that either of them should prevail over the other.

93. PEKAH JOINS WITH REZIN TO ATTACK JUDAH (2 Kings xvi. 5). Notwithstanding the obvious risks, Pekah resolved to attack the neighbouring kingdom of Judah. He had, it appears (2 Kings xv. 37), formed for this purpose an alliance with Rezin King of Damascus, as early as the reign of Jotham. But war was deferred till the acces-

<sup>a</sup> See Note to Chronological Table.



sion of the weak Ahaz. The two kings then went "up to war, and they besieged Ahaz." They "could not overcome him," but they did infinite mischief to the people of Judah, which quickly recoiled upon themselves. "Pekah slew in Judah a hundred and twenty thousand in one day,"<sup>a</sup> and carried off to Samaria nearly twice as many, and "much spoil." The prophet Oded rebuked the people for this savage treatment of their brethren, warning them that, on account of it, "the fierce wrath of Jehovah was upon them." The result was, that the captives were fed and clothed, and sent "back to Jericho, the city of palm trees, to their brethren."

While Pekah was harassing Ahaz of Judah, in the centre of his dominions, Rezin attacked his outlying territories. He "recovered Elath<sup>b</sup> to Syria, and drove the Jews from Elath." This was the loss to Judah of an important centre of commerce.

94. AHAZ OBTAINS HELP FROM ASSYRIA (2 Kings xvi. 7). Now occurred the inevitable result of this short-sighted attack. Ahaz asked help from Assyria. He knew well what a desperate resource this was. It was at best but the less of two great evils. The powerful Assyrian help could not but be a costly favour. Treasures, dearer to a nation than "the silver and gold that was found in the house of Jehovah and in the treasures of the king's house," which formed the preliminary present, would infallibly be demanded, sooner or later. Of course, the King of Assyria complied with Ahaz's request. It was the sort of opening for which he was on the outlook. He came and speedily disposed of the king's two short-sighted assailants.

#### 95. FATE OF REZIN AND PEKAH (2 Kings

<sup>a</sup> Here, as in some other passages, the numbers may have been exaggerated by the mistakes of copyists. It has been remarked, however, that this truculent style of warfare is only too characteristic of Gilcadite warriors.

<sup>b</sup> Elath, or Eloth, a town "on the shore of the Red Sea, in the land of Edom," at the head of the Arabian and Elanitic Gulf, beside Ezion-Geber: modern name, *Eyleh*.

xvi. 9). "The king of Assyria went up against Damascus, and took it, and carried (the people of) it to Kir,<sup>a</sup> and slew Rezin." Thus this wanton aggression cost Rezin his life, and Damascus its independence; for it never again appears as a distinct and independent power.

Pekah was not dealt with quite so severely. The Assyrian was satisfied with stripping him of his Northern possessions and those on the east of Jordan, and carrying off the inhabitants "captive to Assyria" (2 Kings xv. 29). But though Pekah was spared, he was discredited and no longer safe. His failure created dissaffection, which ended in conspiracy. "Hoshea, the son of Remaliah, made a conspiracy against Pekah, and smote him and slew him, and reigned in his stead."

96. THE ASSYRIAN ACCOUNT OF THESE EVENTS. Happily for the confirmation of the Scripture narrative, Tiglath-pileser II. caused a record of these his achievements to be made at the time. The contemporary record has lately been discovered and deciphered. Some of the tablets are considerably mutilated, but their general meaning is clear; as is also their complete correspondence with the scriptural account. Rezin, when defeated, "to save his life, fled away alone, and like a deer, and into the great gate of the city he entered . . . Damascus, his city, I besieged, and like a caged bird I enclosed him."<sup>b</sup>

The conquest of Israel and the captivity of the people he thus notices. "The land of Beth-omri (Samaria) . . . the tribe . . . the goods of the people and their furniture to Assyria, I sent . . . Pekah their king . . . and Hoshea . . . to the kingdom over them I appointed . . . their tribute of them I received, and to Assyria I sent."<sup>c</sup> A word is occasionally obliterated, but it is easily supplied.

<sup>a</sup> The locality of Kir has not been identified. Some suppose it was the region of the river Kur; others that it was some well-known stronghold; e.g., Kir-Haraseth, Car-Chemish (the fort of Chemosh).

<sup>b</sup> Smith, "Assyrian Discoveries," p. 282; Layard's "Inscriptions," plate 72.

<sup>c</sup> Ibid, p. 285.

*Hoshea, Nineteenth and Last King.*

(B.C. 730—721.)

97. **ADOPTS A RUINOUS POLICY** (2 Kings xvii.). Hoshea, the last of the kings, has the distinction of being, not exactly the best, for none of them were good, but the least bad of the whole. He “did evil in the sight of Jehovah, but not as the kings of Israel that went before him.” The only point in which, so far as scriptural testimony goes, Hoshea was less culpable than his predecessors, appears to have been his discouragement of the worship of the golden calves. He is the only king who is not said to have “walked in the way of Jeroboam.” There may not have been much merit in this, as before now both the golden calves appear to have been carried off as spoils of war to Assyria.

The only positive steps which Hoshea is recorded to have taken in government were ruinously calamitous, both to himself and to the nation. He strove to escape from the thralldom of Assyria—a thing utterly impossible in the then crippled condition of the nation. Apparently he discontinued the payment of tribute on the death of Tiglath-pileser; as if the tribute had been merely a personal thing, ceasing with the king who imposed it. But “against them came up” the new king Shalmaneser, “and Hoshea became his servant, and paid him tribute.”

98. **HOSHEA DETECTED IN AN ATTEMPT TO TREAT WITH EGYPT IS CAST INTO PRISON** (2 Kings xvii. 4). Hoshea next attempted to accomplish his purpose through an alliance with Egypt. Circumstances seemed favourable. The Assyrians had lately encountered a check from two neighbours of Israel. Hezekiah of Judah, strong in his trust in Jehovah, had refused tribute; the Tyrians, in their island stronghold, had stood out successfully against the most determined assaults of the Assyrian hosts. Even in these favourable circumstances, Hoshea could not venture on resistance single handed. Like Jero-

boam, the first King, he, the last, looked to Egypt for help. He "sent messengers to So,"<sup>a</sup> King of Egypt. But circumstances were changed. Israel's day of trial was now not beginning but ending. Even had Egypt been able and willing to help Hoshea, it had no chance. The unfortunate king had, as the first step, neglected to pay his yearly tribute. This appears to have led to the discovery of his embassy to Egypt. "The King of Assyria found conspiracy" in him. "Therefore" he "shut him up and bound him in prison." Nothing is stated as to the way and manner in which this was done, nor the time. It appears, however, to have taken place about the seventh year of Hoshea's reign (2 Kings xviii. 9). Probably Hoshea was shut up, as a hostage, for the good behaviour of his people. If so, the object was not attained, for the people held out till they were literally rooted out of the land. The king himself, however, though he continued nominally to reign, for two or three years longer, disappears from history altogether at this stage. He is never heard of again. "As for Samaria," says Hosea (x. 7.) "her king is cut off, as the foam upon the water," "utterly cut off," "in a morning" (x. 15).

99. FALL OF SAMARIA (2 Kings xvii. 5). Though its king was "shut up and bound" Samaria held out for three years against the utmost efforts of the Assyrian power, thus rivalling the final desperate resistance of Jerusalem. Little is known, however, of the particulars of the siege. The historian of "the kings" simply says that, "in the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria took Samaria." The prophets, however (Isaiah, Hosea, Amos, Micah), supply some graphic touches, proving that, as usual in those times, the desperate resistance of the people

<sup>b</sup> So might, by a different pointing, be read Seva or Seveh; and no doubt the king here referred to was *Shebek* or *Sabakôn*, the first king of the Ethiopian twenty-fifth dynasty, and also the monarch who appears on the standard inscription of Sargon at *Khorsabad*, as *Sebech Sultan* of Egypt, who was defeated by the King of Assyria, after the capture of Samaria, at *Rapih*—*Ráphia* (see Smith's Dict., S. V.).

provoked the Assyrians to a savage revenge. "As the end drew near" the people gave themselves up to the frantic revellings of despair.<sup>a</sup> At last the city was stormed. The infants were hurled down the rocky sides of the hill on which the city stood, or destroyed in their mothers' bosoms.<sup>b</sup> Famine and pestilence completed the work of war.<sup>c</sup> The stones of the ruined city were poured down into the rich valley below, and the foundations were laid bare.<sup>d</sup> Palace and hovel alike fell;<sup>e</sup> the statues were broken to pieces;<sup>f</sup> the crown of pride, the glory of Ephraim, was trodden under foot!"<sup>g h</sup>

100. ASSYRIAN ACCOUNT OF THE CAPTURE.<sup>i</sup> The recently discovered contemporary Assyrian records confirm the above account of the capture of the city, and add some interesting details. Though Shalmaneser laid siege to the city, it was not he that actually took it. The scripture, indeed, nowhere says that he did. In the third year "they took it" (2 Kings xviii. 10). Sargon, who seems to have succeeded Shalmaneser towards the close of the three years' siege, claims the capture of the city as the first achievement of his reign. "Samaria I besieged, I captured; 27,280 people dwelling in the midst of it I carried captive; 50 chariots from among them I selected, and the rest of them I distributed. My general over them I appointed, and the taxes of the former king I fixed on them."<sup>k</sup>

101. CAPTIVITY OF THE INHABITANTS (2 Kings xvii. 6). "The king of Assyria carried Israel away into Assyria." The precise number carried away is stated by Sargon as 27,280. It has been suggested that these were possibly heads of families

<sup>a</sup> Isaiah xxviii. 1-6.

<sup>b</sup> Hosea x. 14; xiii. 16.

<sup>c</sup> Amos vi. 9, 10.

<sup>d</sup> Micah i. 6.

<sup>e</sup> Amos vi. 11.

<sup>f</sup> Micah i. 7.

<sup>g</sup> Isaiah xxviii. 3.

<sup>h</sup> Stanley Lectures, &c., II. 368.

<sup>i</sup> "Throughout the reign of Hoshea the correspondence between the Assyrian Records and the Bible is striking and complete."—Smith—Assyrian Canon. p. 176.

<sup>k</sup> Smith—Assyrian Eponym. Canon, p. 125, who, however, by an apparent oversight, makes the number, 27,290.

only. It has also been supposed that at a later period of his reign Sargon came back and carried off the greater part of the remaining inhabitants.

102. PLACE OF THE CAPTIVITY (2 Kings xvii. 6; xviii. 11; 1 Chron. v. 26). Much uncertainty has hitherto prevailed as to the precise localities to which Israel were carried captive. The scripture texts are not very distinct, and till recent times there was no such knowledge of the Mesopotamian localities as could throw much light on scripture. The account in Kings (two passages) is more distinct than that in Chronicles. "The king of Assyria carried Israel away into Assyria, and put them in Halah (or Chalach) and on the Habor (or Chabor), the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes." The three Mesopotamian places here mentioned are all described by the ancient geographer Ptolemy as lying together. He places the district of Chalach (Chalc-itis) on the borders of the district of Gauzan (Gauzan-itis), in the vicinity of the river Chabor-as. The Chabor, still called by the same name (Khabour), is the chief affluent of the Euphrates, into which it flows at Karkesia, the ancient Carchemish, the Hittite capital.<sup>a</sup> There is in this region a mound like those of Nineveh and the other ancient cities on the Tigris, which is still called *Gla*, which seems an obvious corruption of Chalah. Thus Halah and Gozan were doubtless districts with towns of the same name situated on the Chabor, near its confluence with the Euphrates.<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup> There is another *Khabour*, which flows into the Tigris north of Nineveh. Ezekiel's *Chebar*, though probably identical in derivation (signifying simply *great*), is believed to have been different from either of these, and to have been some Babylonian stream, possibly Nebuchadnezzar's great canal.

<sup>b</sup> "We know that Jews still lingered in the cities of the Khabour until long after the Arab invasion; and we may perhaps recognise in the Jewish communities of Ras-al-Ain, at the sources of the river, and of Karkisia or Carchemish, at its confluence with the Euphrates, visited and described by Benjamin of Tudela, in the latter end of the twelfth century, the descendants of the captive Israelites."—Layard, *Nineveh and Babylon*, I. 284. When visited by Benjamin of Tudela Karkisia contained about 500 Jews, under two rabbis.—*Ibid.*

In no other part of Mesopotamia can a locality be found so fully answering the descriptions of the sacred text. Of "the cities of the Medes," to which captives were sent, the only one of which there is any certain knowledge is Rages,<sup>a</sup> afterwards contracted to Reu, and still called *Rhey*. It is said to be situated about 5 miles south-east of Teheran.<sup>b</sup>

103. EFFECT OF THE CAPTIVITY ON ISRAEL. Notwithstanding a persistent belief to the contrary, dating from earliest Christian ages, and often revived with curious additions in mediæval and modern times, it may be safely affirmed that the captivity proved the complete dispersion of Northern Israel, not only as a nation and a church, but as a distinct and separate community of any description. It can hardly be said that the ten tribes ever reappear in history, except here and there, as a remnant or fragment. They are referred to in the New Testament as part of "the twelve tribes of the dispersion"<sup>c</sup> (James i. 1). Practically from this time there was, for the whole of God's ancient people, but one tribe, that of Judah, which held its ground against Assyria for yet one hundred and twenty-three years, and became the rallying point for the dispersed of every tribe, and eventually gave its name to the whole race. Those of the people who, in the last struggle, escaped into the territories of Judah or other neighbouring countries, naturally looked to Judah as the head and home of their

<sup>a</sup> Rages or Ragau is not mentioned in the Canonical Scriptures, but it occurs in the Apocrypha (Tobit i. 14; v. 5; vi. 9; and Judith i. 5 and 15). Tobit states that Israelitish captives were taken there by Enemessar (Shalmaneser).

<sup>b</sup> An additional place, Hara, is given in the account in Chronicles. The most probable view appears to be that this was Haran or Charran, to which Abraham removed from Ur, and which, to this day, is called *Harran*, and lies "in the beautiful stretch of country between the Khabour and the Euphrates," on the river *Belik*, the ancient Bilichus. Some think that "Hara," *i.e.*, *mountain chain*, is only the Aramean name for Media.

<sup>c</sup> The few recognitions of particular tribes are merely matters of genealogy. Thus the prophetess Anna was "of the tribe of Asher." St Paul was "of the tribe of Benjamin." The references to the twelve tribes in Acts xxvi. 7, and Rev. vii. 5-8, are wholly of a general nature.

race. And when Judah itself was carried off to Babylon, many of the exiled Israelites joined them from Assyria and swelled that "immense Jewish population which made Babylonia a second Palestine."<sup>a</sup> Adversity united the people as prosperity had divided them.

104. THE FATE OF THE TEN TRIBES. The belief has hardly yet been exploded that the ten tribes will one day be discovered living together in some remote region of the East. The more they have been searched for, however, the less prospect has there been of their ever being found. The only evidence of their existence, which has resulted from careful recent Eastern exploration, has been the discovery of such traces of the tribes as may be found in almost any country to which they have had access.

105. THE SAMARITANS (2 Kings xvii. 24-29). A more tangible objection to the belief in complete dispersion—one on which several eminent authorities have recently laid stress—is the uninterrupted existence to this day of the Samaritan race in the old home of Israel. The Samaritans have, with certain modifications, continued all along to differ in worship from the Jews much as Israel differed from Judah. It is very natural to suppose that the predominant element amongst them has always been of the old Israelitish stock—that not the whole, but only a part of the population was carried off, a large remnant taking temporary refuge in neighbouring countries, and then returning to their old homes on the return of peace. However natural this supposition may be, it seems wholly unsupported by proof. The proof, in fact, is all the other way. The Scriptural account of the re-peopling of Samaria after the captivity is coherent, and, with certain events of later occurrence, seems fully sufficient to account for all the facts of

<sup>a</sup> In the twelfth century Benjamin of Tudela "found no less than twenty thousand Jews dwelling within twenty miles of Babylon, and worshipping in the synagogue built, according to tradition, by the prophet Daniel himself." The numbers are now "greatly diminished."—See Layard's *Nineveh and Babylon*, II. pp. 523-4.



subsequent Samaritan history. The Cuthœan colonists who were placed in Samaria were indeed heathens at first, but it is explained how they soon became converted to a mongrel religion, not very dissimilar to that of their Israelitish predecessors. They were, in fact, it appears, too true and consistent heathens to believe that they could prosper in their new country unless they "knew the name of the God of the land." They therefore applied to their king, who caused one of the captive Israelite priests to be sent back to them to "teach them the manner of the God of the land," and "how to fear Jehovah." Then they came to "fear Jehovah, and serve their graven images," *i.e.*, they maintained, as many Israelites had done, a hybrid worship and service, either paying homage to Jehovah as one of several gods, or worshipping him through an image. This condition of matters apparently continued till (in 409 B.C.) they were joined by the Jewish priest Manasseh, who built the Temple on Mount Gerizim, and brought the Samaritan worship into greater conformity with the Jewish. These facts explain the continued existence of the Samaritan church and community. They prove also that the eventual close resemblance in worship may have been due mainly not to local Israelites, but to Jewish renegades. Anyhow the Samaritans cannot be accepted as incontrovertible evidence against the completeness of the dispersion. It was not as a distinct and separate community that the ten tribes were ever again to be known, but as "tribes of the dispersion:"<sup>a</sup> "tribes of the wandering foot and weary breast."

106. CHANGE OF SPOKEN LANGUAGE. One inevitable result of dispersion was a change in the speech of the people. As a matter of course this soon became the language of the people amongst whom each section of the captives happened to be settled. The ancient Semitic tongue, which their

<sup>a</sup> James i. 1, Revised Version; in the Authorised Version, "tribes scattered abroad."

fathers had spoken, and in which their Scriptures were written, became from the period of the dispersion practically a dead language, used only in worship or in intercourse with brethren from a strange land ; and like the race it did not take the name by which it is known to the world from Israel. Neither is it the Jewish language. It goes back for its name to the origin and the first migration of the race, and recalls neither of the peoples who crossed the Euphrates to Mesopotamia from Canaan as captives, but the small band who crossed from Mesopotamia to Canaan as God's chosen settlers—the *Hebrews*.

107. **THE EXTINCTION OF IDOLATRY.** The main effect on the remnant of Israel that withstood perversion was the utter extinction within it of all idolatrous proclivities. This was plainly the divine purpose in bringing the captivity about, and it was accomplished. Under the chastening influences of adversity, and the impressive appeals of their faithful prophets and priests, the captive Israelites came at last to realise the true character of Jehovah, regarding him from this time as the only living and true God, supreme over every nation and people and tongue.

#### QUESTIONS AND POINTS FOR INQUIRY.

1. *In what sense was the career of Jeroboam II. great ?*
2. *Is there anything in what the prophecies say of the condition of the nation during Jeroboam's reign which explains how soon his conquests vanished ?*
3. *In what respect did the providential treatment of the nation change at this time ?*
4. *Which of the kings of Israel became the first regular tributary of Assyria ? Was he the first of the Israelitish kings who paid tribute to that power ?*
5. *Shalmaneser laid siege to Samaria—did he actually take the city ? or, if not, who did ? and where is the proof ?*
6. *To what districts were the people led captive ? What were the Habor and Gozan ?*

# MACNIVEN & WALLACE'S Bible Class Primers.

EDITED BY PROFESSOR SALMOND, D.D.

---

Each Primer is a complete text-book on its subject arranged in sections, with maps, and questions for examination.

*Price, in Cloth, 8d. ; Paper, 6d.*

---

This Series is intended to provide text-books abreast of the scholarship of the day, but moderate enough in size and price to fit them for general use among young people under religious instruction at week-day and Sunday schools, and in Bible classes. It is meant not to conflict with any existing series, but to serve as a preparation for larger and costlier manuals. The volumes will be written by competent scholars, known for their interest in the young, and belonging to various branches of the Church of the Reformation.

## OPINIONS OF THE SERIES.

“For fulness of information, clearness of consideration, and for a complete and comprehensive view of the subject of which they treat, they are, as far as we know, *unique*. They need only to be better known to command a wide circulation in England as well as Scotland. Teachers of the senior classes in our Sunday schools could have no better preparation for their work, and if they would put them in the hands of the scholars and examine upon them, meanwhile giving such further explanatory remarks as their own more extended reading might suggest, the training would be much more satisfactory than it is at present.”—*Congregationalist*.

“The cheapness and adequate scholarship of these Bible Class Primers are calculated to secure for them a most useful sphere of influence. The name of the editor, Professor Salmond, at once guarantees their high quality and evangelical character.”—*Christian*.

“Will be of immense benefit to the cause of Bible knowledge throughout the land.”—*Daily Review*.

“The issue of such volumes in which trained professional skill puts itself at the service of babes marks a new and hopeful era in religious instruction.”—*Aberdeen Free Press*.

---

132 PRINCES STREET, EDINBURGH.

# Bible Class Primers.

EDITED BY PROFESSOR SALMOND, D.D.

## LIFE OF DAVID.

By the late REV. PETER THOMSON, M.A., St Fergus.

(*One of the Contributors to the Teachers' Bible.*)

*With Maps. Seventh Thousand. Clo ¼, price 8d.; paper, 6d.*

The Dean of Norwich (E. M. Goulburn, D.D.) says:—  
“The writer seems to treat his subject both succinctly and learnedly, and, while saying nothing to impair the reverence which should be paid to Holy Scripture as God’s inspired word, to keep abreast of the literature of the day and the progress which has been made in the knowledge of Hebrew.”

The Dean of Lichfield (Ed. Bickersteth, D.D.) says:—  
“The little book shows more than ordinary scholarship and culture, and it appears to me to be full of information given in an interesting and original form. I can heartily recommend it for the purpose for which you have published it.”

The Dean of Peterborough (J. J. Stewart Perrowne, D.D.) says:—“It seems to me to be very well executed, and likely to be very useful to teachers, and I shall be glad to recommend it. The arrangement in paragraphs with headings adds much to its usefulness for reference, and also enables pupils to master it more readily.”

The Rev. T. K. Cheyne says:—“It is evidently the work of much study. The accuracy of the facts and the simplicity of the style should commend it to the attention of teachers.”

The Rev. Stanley Leathes, D.D., says:—“I think it is excellent indeed, and have seen nothing of the kind so good; and if the rest of the series are worthy of this, they are very valuable.”

The Rev. Samuel Cox says:—“Mr Thomson has told the story in the simplest language and the briefest compass, so that even the children in a Sunday-school class may read it with understanding and without weariness: while even the most accomplished scholar will find hints in it which will be welcome and helpful to him.”

The Rev. Professor A. B. Bruce, D.D., says:—“It is a very superior and satisfactory performance, admirably fitted for its purpose. It is at once popular and scholarly; the reproduction of the story is vivid and fitted to interest young minds; and there is not a trace of slovenly inaccuracy. The little book is also very healthy in its religious tone. A spirit of real, reverent, manly piety pervades it; just such a spirit as is fitted to impress young minds, and as I greatly desire to see spreading among our rising youth.”

The Rev. J. S. Exell says:—“I am sure that nothing better on the subject could be put into the hands of young people. The idea of the work is good, and it is ably carried out.”

The Christian says:—“Mr Thomson must have spent on this the last labour of his pen an amount of thought and research which will only be apparent when the book is worked through in the Bible Class. That it will stand this severe test we are thoroughly convinced.”

---

MACNIVEN & WALLACE,

# Bible Class Primers.

EDITED BY PROFESSOR SALMOND, D.D.

---

## LIFE OF MOSES.

By the Rev. JAMES IVERACH, M.A. Aberdeen.

With Map. Thirteenth Thousand. Cloth, 8s.; paper, 6d.

---

“A very model of the way in which accurate and complete information may be compressed into a small space, without the sacrifice of vividness or interest.”—*Samuel G. Green, D.D.*

“Accurately done, clear, mature, and scholarly.”—*Christian.*

“For Mr Iverach’s work we have nothing but praise. It is concise and accurate, written in good English, with as little superfluous as can well be. Very few books meant for young people could be named which more thoroughly fulfil their object than this.”—*Dundee Advertiser.*

“Thoroughly maintains the high character of the first volume. . . . It is within the reach of all, for the volumes of this valuable series are published at sixpence each.”—*E. P. Juv. Messenger.*

“This is just what a ‘Bible Class Primer’ should be, transparent and forcible in style, abreast of the scholarship of the day, and yet avoiding the discussion of vexed or non-essential questions.”—*Literary World.*

“This little book is a worthy sequel to the Life of David. It is a clear and thoughtful sketch of the history of the Exodus and of the Life of Moses. The author has woven into his narrative a great deal of information, and contrived to set the history in such lights that it becomes in his hands full of fresh suggestions and interesting meanings.”—*Daily Review.*

“Whoever sits down to its perusal will find it difficult to rise without going through with it—the narrative is so lucid, and interesting, and comprehensive.”—*Christian Week.*

---

132 PRINCES STREET, EDINBURGH.

# Bible Class Primers

EDITED BY PROFESSOR SALMOND, D.D.

---

## LIFE OF PAUL.

By the Rev. J. PATON GLOAG, D.D., Galashiels.

*With Map. Third Thousand. Cloth, 8d.; paper, 6d.*

---

“Is exactly what it professes to be. Is full of the results of reading, is written in a quiet and attractive way, and combines scholarship with really popular art in treatment. Useful as a book of reference or for special preparation, it is also a book to read systematically, and in this respect Dr Gloag has scored an undoubted success.”—*Outlook*.

“The work has been entrusted to competent hands, and for accuracy, condensation, and completeness of information, this little book could not well be surpassed.”—*Daily Review*.

---

## LIFE AND REIGN OF SOLOMON.

By the Rev. RAYNER WINTERBOTHAM, M.A, LL.B.,  
Fraserburgh.

*With Map. Fifth Thousand. Cloth, 8d.; paper, 6d.*

---

“No mere dry conspectus, but a vivid story; and its liveliness does not interfere in the slightest degree with the exact and full statement of the facts which it is desirable to have in such a work.”—*Christian Leader*.

“Excellent in design and production.”—*Christian*.

---

MACNIVEN & WALLACE

# Bible Class Primers.

EDITED BY PROFESSOR SALMOND, D.D.

## BIBLE WORDS AND PHRASES

*EXPLAINED AND ILLUSTRATED.*

By CHARLES MICHIE, M.A., Aberdeen.

*Second Thousand. 18mo, Cloth, 1s.*

“Small as the book is, it yet has a more extensive range than any of its predecessors. The book will be found interesting and instructive, and of the greatest value to young students and teachers.”—*Athenæum*.

“Cannot fail to be of service. With such helps as these, to be an inefficient teacher is to be blameworthy.”—*Sword and Trowel*.

“A perfect mine of knowledge.”—*Congregationalist*.

“A manual of great accuracy, completeness, usefulness, and cheapness.”—*Literary World*.

“The compiler has performed his task in a most satisfactory manner, producing a manual that ought to be in the hands of every reader of the English Bible.”—*Glasgow Daily Mail*.

“A boon not only to the young people in Bible classes, but also to Sunday-school teachers, and even to ministers. There is no reader of the English Bible who may not derive profit from a careful study of this little hand-book.”—*Christian Leader*.

“A highly commendable work, and cannot fail to prove very valuable to readers of the Authorised Version of the Bible. He has embodied the result of his investigations briefly, clearly, and pointedly.”—*Dundee Advertiser*.

“A little book of quite extraordinary merit. We venture to say that it will take its place as the book on the subject of which it treats. It is a book which ought to be in the hands of all students of the English Bible, and will no doubt retain its place for many years as the best book on Bible Words and Phrases. Every one who reads the English Bible ought to have this book ever close at hand.”—*Aberdeen Free Press*.

132 PRINCES STREET; EDINBURGH.

# Bible Class Primers.

EDITED BY PROFESSOR SALMOND, D.D.

---

## THE KINGS OF ISRAEL.

By the Rev. W. WALKER, M.A., Monymusk.

*With Map. Cloth 8d., paper 6d. [Just ready.]*

---

## THE HISTORY OF THE REFORMATION.

By the Rev. Professor WITHEROW.

*Cloth 8d., paper 6d. [Just ready.]*

---

## JOSHUA AND THE CONQUEST.

By the Rev. Professor CROSKERY.

*With Map. Cloth, 8d., paper, 6d. [Just ready.]*

---

## THE KINGS OF JUDAH.

By the Rev. Professor GIVEN, Ph.D.

*[Nearly ready.]*

---

*In Preparation.*

### ABRAHAM AND THE PATRIARCHAL AGE—

By the Rev. Professor A. B. BRUCE, D.D., Glasgow.

### LIFE AND TIMES OF JOSEPH—

By the Rev. JAMES DODDS, D.D., Edinburgh.

### THE PERIOD OF THE JUDGES—

By the Rev. Professor PATERSON, M.A., Edinburgh.

### THE EXILE AND THE RETURN—

By the Rev. Professor A. B. DAVIDSON, D.D., Edinburgh

---

MACNIVEN & WALLACE.



2nd 25

**BIBLE CLASS PRIMERS**—*continued.*

**THE PROPHETS OF THE EIGHTH CENTURY—**

By the Rev. W. ROBERTSON SMITH, LL.D.

**THE TABERNACLE AND THE TEMPLE—**

By JAMES BURGESS, LL.D., F.R.G.S.

**HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY OF THE HOLY LAND—**

By the Rev. S. R. MACPHAIL, M.A., Liverpool.

**HISTORICAL CONNECTION BETWEEN THE OLD  
AND NEW TESTAMENTS—**

By the Rev. Professor J. GIBB, M.A., London.

**THE GOSPEL PARABLES—**

By the Rev. DAVID SOMERVILLE, M.A., Rothesay.

**OUTLINES OF EARLY CHURCH HISTORY—**

By the Rev. H. WALLIS SMITH, D.D., Kirknewton.

**SCOTTISH CHURCH HISTORY—**

By the Rev. G. JOHNSTONE, B.D., Liverpool.

---

*The following Subjects will also be embraced in  
the Series :—*

THE GOSPEL MIRACLES.

THE TWELVE.

THE LIFE OF OUR LORD.

INTRODUCTION TO THE OLD AND NEW TESTA-  
MENTS.

OUTLINES OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

THE PLANTING OF THE CHURCH.

OUTLINES OF THE HISTORY OF MISSIONS.

---

MACNIVEN & WALLACE,  
132 PRINCES STREET, EDINBURGH.

